



Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab Affairs: Syrian, Iraqi Foreign Ministers To Meet

JN1102115596 *Manama WAKH in Arabic*
1017 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Muscat, 11 Feb (WAKH) — Press sources said here today that a meeting between the Iraqi and Syrian foreign ministers will be held in Cairo in March. Today's issue of the Omani AL-WATAN newspaper cited a prominent Arab official, who it said visited Baghdad recently, as saying: The talks held by the first under secretary of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry with his Syrian counterpart in Damascus over many rounds have resulted in real progress toward the normalization of relations between the two countries. Therefore, the Iraqi side proposed that the level of meetings be upgraded to the level of foreign ministers.

The newspaper said that Arab League Secretary General 'Isma't 'Abd-al-Majid has been charged with bringing together the Iraqi Foreign Minister [Muhammad Sa'id] al-Sahhaf and Syrian counterpart Faruq al-Shar' on the sidelines of the Arab League ministerial meeting scheduled to be held in Cairo on 13 March.

Inter-Arab Affairs: Arab League Official on Nuclear Arms, U.S. Decision

NC1102194396 *Cairo MENA in Arabic*
1740 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait, 11 Feb (MENA)—Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, Arab League assistant secretary general for political affairs, has called on Israel to understand that no comprehensive peace will be established in the region without a complete pullout from the occupied Arab territories.

In an interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper AL-ANBA' today, he also demanded the removal of weapons of mass destruction from the Middle East and that Israel discard nuclear arms.

Al-'Allaf said that the U.S. Congress decision to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem is false and that it hampers the entire peace process. He hoped that other countries will not follow suit of the U.S. Congress because Jerusalem has a special standing for both Christians and Muslims.

Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: Qaddumi To Participate in Final Status Talks

JN1102203496 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1900 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, said he will participate in running the final status negotiations, which are expected to start in May.

He added that these negotiations provide a good opportunity to strengthen national unity. He urged all Palestinian factions to take part in them.

Palestinian Affairs: Qaddumi—Charter Change Aimed at Destroying Unity

JN1202105096 *Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic*
0600 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] PLO Political Department Head Faruq Qaddumi has decided to participate in the negotiations on the final status of the Palestinian territories. He, however, viewed the amendment of the Palestinian National Charter as an attempt to destroy the Palestinian national unity. He suggested a political action program instead of amending the charter. Qaddumi said this to our Cairo Correspondent Muna Salim:

[Begin Qaddumi recording] Amending the charter will mean the end of the PLO, which Israel recognized. Who will it recognize then? This will also separate Palestinians in the homeland from those in the diaspora. The amendment is intended to destroy the Palestinian forces and national unity. Therefore, we appeal to all not to amend the charter but to work out a political action program and give the opportunity to all opposition forces and those that have reservations to meet under the canopy of a Palestinian provisional government which has a political program that agrees with the peace process or with President Bush's initiative. Thus, we may emerge from the dilemma in which we find ourselves. [end recording]

Palestinian Affairs: Qaddumi Ready To Lead Delegation to Final-Status Talks

NC1202085196 *Cairo MENA in Arabic*
0720 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 12 Feb—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO Political Department, has warned against any abolition or amendment of the Palestinian National Charter. He said that if the charter is abolished it would be a major catastrophe that would end the PLO, annul its representation of the entire Palestinian people,

deal a blow to national unity between the Palestinians inside and the Palestinians outside [Palestinian territories], and open the door to chaos and bloodshed.

In a statement published today in the newspaper AL-'ARABI, the organ of the opposition Nasirite Arab Democratic Party, Qaddumi, who is also known as Abu-al-Lutf, said that when an independent Palestinian state is established and elections are held, there will be a new constitution and the PLO will cease to exist or will become a political party.

Qaddumi said the Taba [Oslo B] accord is illegal and not binding on the PLO because it was not submitted to the PLO Executive Committee for approval. He said most Palestine National Council [PNC] members will approve no amendment of the charter. He said the Palestinians must not give in to Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' threats not to start the final-status talks unless the clauses hostile to Israel in the National Charter are removed. He said the Palestinian gains from the talks have been very few so far. Israel is not adhering to several clauses in the agreements it signed. Before asking the Palestinians to adhere to the clauses agreed upon in the Taba accord, Israel must meet its own obligations. For example, Israel has agreed on the return of 750,000 displaced persons. But none has returned so far.

To break the impasse and avert a collapse of the PLO, Qaddumi proposed that the PNC, expected to meet in Cairo, adopt a decisive program of action. He said that in accordance with a PNC decision, the PLO is the provisional government, while in accordance with the Declaration of Principles and the Taba accord, the Palestinian Authority is a local administration that has no jurisdiction in foreign affairs and cannot open embassies and consulates abroad. He said the PLO Executive Committee must remain the source of authority.

For the first time Qaddumi announced that he is prepared, as head of the PLO Political Department, to be in charge of the final-status talks scheduled to begin in May, providing there is national consensus on this. He said: If the PLO Executive Committee authorizes me to conduct the final-status talks, I will accept and shoulder this responsibility.

On the reasons for his new stance, Qaddumi said: The Palestinians have achieved no meaningful gains so far. What has happened is that the PLO is acting on behalf of Israel in protecting Israel's security in the occupied Palestinian territories. The final status talks are the essence of the Palestinian issue. They will deal with Jerusalem, the removal of occupation and the settlements, and the return of the refugees and displaced persons.

Asked if Israel will welcome his appointment to run the talks, Qaddumi said: This does not concern me. The PNC has elected me as foreign minister. This is my responsibility. But there must be national consensus that I assume this role. Asked if this means he is prepared to return, he said: I will not enter before the occupation is removed and the crossings are opened.

Palestinian Affairs: Qaddumi Urges Political Plan Instead of Charter Change

*TAI102112096 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic
8 Feb 96 pp 1, 7*

[Report by Munir 'Abd-al-Rahman]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, QUDS PRESS — A senior Palestinian official has proposed to the PLO to formulate a peace plan between the Palestinians and Israel that would be consistent with recognizing the Hebrew state, instead of having the Palestinian National Charter amended. Israel is demanding the cancellation of basic articles in the charter that call for its destruction.

Faruq Qaddumi, Abu-al-Lutf, head of the PLO Political Department, proposed the formulation of a political action program — to which the PLO would commit itself — that affirms the Palestinian people's desire to establish a just peace with Israel.

In a statement to QUDS PRESS yesterday, Qaddumi added that in its recent session held in Algiers in 1988, the Palestine National Council [PNC] endorsed the possibility of solving the Palestinian-Israeli conflict on the basis of the establishment of two states in Palestine, one Jewish and the other Arab Palestinian. He stressed that this decision was made "in harmony with the resolutions of international legitimacy. The PNC officially recognized Resolution 242 and the restoration of the Palestinian people's legitimate national rights."

Qaddumi, who is No. 2 in Fatah, said that Resolution 242 calls for Israel's withdrawal from the Arab territories that it has been occupying since 1967, including the eastern part of Jerusalem; finding a just solution to the refugee problem; and the existence of secure and recognized borders for all the countries of the region.

Qaddumi ruled out any other proposal that can meet the Israeli conditions on annulling the charter. He said that "his proposal constitutes the basis for emerging from the crisis that Israel and its allies are trying to create in the Palestinian people's ranks." He warned that if the charter is amended, "the PLO will be emptied of its liberation content. This will lead to the untying of the Palestinian knot that brings together the political forces and the national leaders."

Qaddumi said that Israel is no longer exposed to any threat after signing peace agreements with Egypt, the PLO, and Jordan. He added: It is Israel that is threatening Arab security and that possesses nuclear weapons.

Palestinian Affairs: Mubarak Assures 'Arafat of Support for Gaza Airport

JN1202103796 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
0700 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Excellency President Yasir 'Arafat received a telephone call from his brother Egyptian President Husni Mubarak yesterday evening.

The Egyptian president said his country supports Palestinian efforts to build the Gaza international airport. He added that Cairo will do all it can to support this project.

Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa had given similar assurances in another telephone contact with President Yasir 'Arafat.

Palestinian Affairs: Nabulus Mayor—Closure Violates Spirit of Peace

NC1102084696 *Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic*
0615 GMT 11 Feb 96

[Telephone interview with Nabulus Mayor Ghassan al-Shak'ah in Nabulus by Muhammad al-Aswad in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [al-Aswad] The Israeli occupation troops have decided to close Nabulus, which is under the jurisdiction of the Palestinian self-rule Authority, effective 0600 yesterday, Saturday [10 February]. An Israeli army spokesman made the announcement without giving any reason. We have Nabulus Mayor Ghassan al-Shak'ah on the line with us from Nabulus. Welcome Mr. Ghassan.

[Al-Shak'ah] Thank you.

[Al-Aswad] The aforementioned Israeli decision bans Israelis and vehicles from entering Nabulus. What are the reasons for this decision and how will it affect the Nabulus people?

[Al-Shak'ah] Let me explain first that the ban applies to anyone not from Nabulus. So this edict also applies to Palestinians from other Palestinian areas such as Ramallah, Jericho, and Hebron, not just to Israelis. So it is a ban against entry by all nonresidents of Nabulus. They cite security reasons for the decision, but we see it as a kind of violation of the agreement and more importantly, as a violation of the spirit of peace that both sides are supposed to be promoting. It will have

very negative impact on the citizens of Nabulus due to the political, economic, and trade burdens it creates. We hope it will not last long.

[Al-Aswad] You mentioned that the closure is for security reasons, as the Israeli side has claimed, but the Israelis always use security as a loosely-defined excuse to impose such measures on Palestinian cities. What are the precise reasons for this decision?

[Al-Shak'ah] They have not announced the real reasons, but security is behind every action. By citing security, they prevent anyone from arguing, either by the peace-loving Israelis or the Palestinians. However, I see no practical reason for imposing this military blockade.

[Al-Aswad] Under the agreement between the Palestinian Authority [PA] and Israel, do the Israeli authorities have any right to close Nabulus...

[Al-Shak'ah, interrupting] They are definitely not entitled to impose such measures. They can prevent Israelis from entering Nabulus, but imposing a blockade on Nabulus preventing nonresidents from entering or leaving it is not in their power and is a violation of the agreement.

[Al-Aswad] Have you taken any measures to oppose this decision?

[Al-Shak'ah] We have asked the Palestinian liaison officers to contact the Israeli side to end this action, which otherwise will cause further deterioration in bilateral relations and in the economic conditions of the city.

[Al-Aswad] Any luck so far?

[Al-Shak'ah] Only 24 hours have passed, so you can't expect results so soon. However, we hope it will not last too long so we can avoid negative results.

[Al-Aswad] What is the PA's position on the Israeli decision?

[Al-Shak'ah] The PA's position on such matters is clear—first that it is a violation of the accord; and second, that it will negatively affect the Palestinian citizens. Thus, it is natural for the official and popular Palestinian stands oppose such measures. However, we are aware of Israel's intransigence and its interpretation of security matters, which applies to Israeli security only. [passage omitted]

[Al-Aswad] Do you believe that the closure is related to the election campaign?

[Al-Shak'ah] In my opinion, yes. The Israeli Government is taking these measures for election campaign reasons.

[Al-Aswad] Thank you, Mr. al-Shak'ah.

[Al-Shak'ah] Thanks to you and greetings to the fraternal Egyptian people.

**Palestinian Affairs: Information Ministry
Condemns Ramallah Closure**

*JN1202115996 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic
1000 GMT 12 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli occupation forces imposed a military siege on Ramallah today under security pretexts.

The Israeli occupation authorities imposed a similar military siege on Qalqilyah last night.

Commenting on the Israeli occupation forces' behavior, the Information Ministry said the following:

The Israeli forces of occupation imposed a closure on Ramallah and al-Birah this morning and prevented citizens, students, workers, and employees from entering or leaving them. The Israeli authorities did not give any reason for this provocative and inhumane measure which has paralyzed the two cities, interrupted all their contacts with their environment, and rendered them hostage to the occupation forces.

The Information Ministry adds that this unjustified Israeli measure takes us back to the system of collective punishment which is banned even during war.

How then can the occupation forces resort to this system during the peace era and when the peace process experiences a new drive on more than one track? This provocative measure is very serious since it violates the agreements signed between the Palestinian National Authority and the Israeli Government, and because it is part of the series of the daily multifaceted Israeli violations and provocations such as land expropriation, settlement expansion, establishment of installations, opening bypass roads which fragment the Palestinian homeland, and the refusal to release detainees and preventing their relatives from visiting them even during this holy month.

The Information Ministry adds that the continuation of these measures as part of a general policy of the Israeli Government will make our people shun peace, create a public opinion that is hostile to such a peace, and create a crisis that would be difficult to solve.

While condemning the collective punishment imposed on Ramallah and al-Birah, the Information Ministry calls on the Israeli Government to immediately halt these measures and stop resorting to the inhumane system of collective punishment, particularly that of taking

Palestinian cities as hostage for blackmail purposes or for imposing conditions.

**Palestinian Affairs: Official Election Results
Announced**

*JN1002214196 Ramallah Palestine Television
Network in Arabic 1859 GMT 10 Feb 96*

[News conference by Mahmud 'Abbas, chairman of the Palestinian Central Election Committee and Dr. Riyadh al-Khudari, official committee spokesman, with unidentified correspondents in Gaza—live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

The results of the presidential elections of the Palestinian Executive Authority are as follows:

Brother President Yasir 'Arafat received 87.01 percent and won as president of the Palestinian National Authority. Sister Samiha Khalil received 9.62 percent.

The results of the Palestinian Legislative Council elections are as follows:

Jerusalem Constituency: Brother Ahmad 'Ali Muhammad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala'; Hanan Dawud Khalil 'Ashrawi; Ahmad Husni Khalil al-Batsh; Ziyad 'Ali Khalil Abu-Zayyad; Hatim Muhammad 'Abd-al-Qadir 'Id; Ahmad Hashim Ahmad al-Zughayyar; Emil Musa Basil Jarju'i; 'Abd-al-Karim Mahmud Musallam Abu-Salah.

Qalqilya Constituency: Mahmud Ahmad Mahmud Da'as, 'Uthman Husayn al-Hajj 'Ali Ghashshash.

Salbit Constituency: Ahmad Fawzi Khalid al-Dik.

Tubas Constituency: Hashim Sulayman Salih Daraghimah.

Janin Constituency: Burhan Nihad Kifah Ibrahim Jarrar, Jamal Shati Yunis [name indistinct], Hikmat Hashim Lutfi Zayd, 'Azzam Najib [name indistinct] al-Ahmad, Ahmad Sulayman Ahmad Irshayd, Fakhri Fahd Musa Ahmad al-Turkman.

Nabulus Constituency: Fayiz 'Arif Ahmad Zaydan, Mu'awiyah 'Ali Sa'id al-Masri, Ghassan Walid Ahmad al-Shak'ah, Mahir Nash'at Tahir al-Masri, Husan Mahmud 'Abd-al-Rahman Khadr, Dalal 'Abd-al-Hafiz Salamah, Kamil Muhammad Salih Qasim, Sallum 'Umr-an Ishaq al-Kahin.

Tulkarm Constituency: Al-Tayyib 'Abd-al-Rahim Mahmud Halim, Mufid Yusuf Muhammad 'Abd-Rabbuh, Hakam 'Umar As'ad Bal'awi, Hasan 'Abd-al-Fattah 'Abd-al-Halim Khurayshah.

Jericho Constituency: Sa'ib Muhammad Salih 'Urayqat.

Bethlehem Constituency: [name indistinct] As'ad Hasan 'Abd-al-Qadir, known as Salah al-Ta'mari; Dawud Hasan Muhammad al-Zir; Bisharah Salibah Sulayman Dawud; Mitri [name indistinct] Jiryis Abu-'Aytah.

Ramallah Constituency: 'Abd-al-Jawwad Salih 'Ata al-Hamayil, Qaddurah Faris Ibrahim Faris Hamid, 'Abd-al-Fattah Muhammad Ibrahim al-Hamayil, Jamil Qasim [name indistinct] al-Tarifi, 'Azmi Salih Muhammad [name indistinct], Marwan Hasib Husayn al-Barghuthi, Ghazi Hanna Khalil Hananya.

Hebron Constituency: Sharif 'Ali Husayn [name indistinct], known as 'Abbas Zaki; Musa Yasin 'Isa Abu-Sabbah; Jamal 'Abd-al-Latif Salih al-Shawbaki; Nabil Mahmud Yusuf 'Amr; Muhammad 'Abd-al-Fattah Muhammad al-Hurani; Rafiq Shakir Darwish al-Natshah; Zahran Khalil Salih Abu-Qubaytah; 'Ali Muhammad Husayn Abu-al-Rish; Sulayman Mahmud Musa Abu-Sunaynah; 'Ali Ibrahim Qazzaz al-Qawasimi.

The results from the Gaza constituencies:

Northern Gaza Constituency: Yusuf 'Attalah Ibrahim Abu-Safiyah, Fu'ad Ibrahim Mahmud 'Id, Hisham 'Ali Husayn Hasan 'Abd-al-Raziq, 'Abd-al-Rahman Tawfiq 'Abd-al-Hadi Hamad, Karam Muhammad Dawud Sarandah, Kamal al-'Abid Muhammad al-Shurafi, 'Imad 'Abd-al-Hamid 'Abd-al-Hadi al-Faluji.

Gaza Constituency:

Gaza City: Haydar Muhyi-al-Din Darwish 'Abd-al-Shafi, Fakhri 'Umran Taha Shaqurah, Nahid Munir Muhammad al-Rayyis, Intisar Mustafa Mahmud al-Wazir, Riyad Dhib Salim al-Za'nun, Ziyad Mahmud Husayn Abu-'Amr, Majid Khalil Mustafa Yaghi, Musa Mahmud Hamid al-Za'mut, Marwan Muhammad Fayiz Kanafani, Yusuf Muhammad Ahmad al-Shanti, Rawiyah Rashad Sa'id al-Shawwa, Faraj Bisharah Salim al-Sarraf.

As for the Dayr al-Balah Constituency, the winners are: Furayh Abu-Middayn, [words indistinct], Jamilah Ahmad Khamis Saydam, Ibrahim Isma'il Ahmad al-Habbash, Jalal Frayh Farhan al-Musaddar.

The Khan Yunus constituency: Nabil 'Ali Rashid Sha'th, Jawad Khalil Hasan al-Tibi, Ra'fat 'Uthman 'Ali al-Najjar, Ibrahim Musa Ibrahim abu-al-Naja, Ahmad al-'Abid Muhammad al-Shibi, Hasan Muhammad Ahmad 'Asfur, Ahmad 'Abd-al-Fattah Ahmad Nasr, and 'Abd-al-Karim Mahmud Musallam Abu-Salah.

Rafah is the last constituency in the state of Palestine: 'Abd-Rabbuh Husayn Sa'd al-Din Abu-'Awn, Muhammad Sulayman Musa Hijazi, Rawhi Ahmad Fattuh,

'Abd-al-'Aziz 'Ali Shahin, and Sulayman Salam al-Rumi.

We wish them and the brother president success in the forthcoming march, God willing. [applause] [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: PA Submits PNC Members List for Israeli Approval

TA1102072296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
0505 GMT 11 Feb 96

[Report by Yoni Ben-Menahem]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Shin Bet is examining a list of Palestine National Council [PNC] members whose entry into the autonomy the Palestinian Authority [PA] is seeking; the list was conveyed by Jamil al-Tarifi to Major General Oren Shahor, coordinator of government activities in the territories. The list comprises 193 names, the most prominent being Shaykh Raja' Bayyud al-Tamimi, a former deportee from Hebron, who is currently the qadi of the PA Police; and Shaykh As'ad Bayyud al-Tamimi, head of the Islamic Jihad's Bayt al-Maqdis faction, which is considered a part of the PLO. The name of Nayif Hawatimah, leader of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, is not on the list. Officially he is an observer, and not a PNC member, and the issue of his entry is to be discussed in the future.

Gen. Shahor's office asked the Palestinians for additional data on the persons on the list, including their date and place of birth and current whereabouts, details that will allow the authorities to ascertain their PNC membership.

Most of the Palestinian legal experts who checked the legal possibility of amending Palestinian Charter articles believe that the PA should draft a new charter based on the Palestinian declaration of independence made at the PNC convention in Algiers in 1988, and that a clause on the establishment of an independent Palestinian state whose capital is Jerusalem should be included.

Acting PNC Chairman Salim al-Za'nun says he does not believe the PNC will convene before May, and that the support of 420 out of the 630 members is required to amend the charter.

The new draft will be brought up for a vote in two readings, when the PNC convenes in Gaza city. Most PNC members, except for 38 members who live in Syria, have already asked 'Arafat to arrange their entry to the autonomy.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat Adviser Denies Date Set To Convene PC*TA1102114296 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic
10 Feb 96 p 1*

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza — Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, President 'Arafat's adviser, has denied Israeli media reports to the effect that ministers have been appointed to the next Palestinian cabinet.

Moreover, he also denied reports by Israeli television that the [Palestinian] Legislative Council [PC] will hold its first meeting on the fourth day of 'Id al-Fitr [around 22 February]. He said that so far no date has been set for the council's convocation.

Palestinian Affairs: DFLP's Hawatimah on PNC Meeting, Negotiations*NC1002150696 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic
5 Feb 96 p 14*

[Interview with DFLP Secretary General Nayif Hawatimah by correspondent 'Ali Sa'id Badwan; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Badwan] Can you comment on the Israeli prime minister's decision to permit a return of the Palestine National Council [PNC] members to the West Bank and Gaza?

[Hawatimah] Shim'on Peres' decision comes more than three years late. We have been calling for the return to the occupied territories of all the PLO leaders and cadres, including the PNC members, since 13 September 1993, the date of the Oslo-A Agreement. However, Rabin and Peres built a Berlin Wall in our face and in the faces of all the forces that objected to or criticized that agreement. In the meantime, as you and all our people know, they opened up all the land, naval, and aerial points of entry, which are all controlled by the Israeli occupation troops, to Brother Yasir 'Arafat and his supporters.

For the past three years, the right of return was exclusively granted to members of 'Arafat's wing. On 21 January, following the farcical elections, Peres announced that Israel would open the crossing points to PNC members. We say that we are ready to return immediately without any Israeli conditions or restrictions. When Peres linked the return to the convening of a PNC meeting in the occupied territories to repeal the PLO Charter, we stated in clear terms that we are ready to return if there were no conditions or restrictions, but we reject the Israeli restrictions.

Holding a PNC session is a Palestinian affair. As for the PLO Charter, it is what politically joined and brought together our people and restored unity to the Palestinian

ranks in the occupied homeland and in the diaspora. As a common national denominator, the charter provided a common framework for a PLO coalition. Therefore, we say "no" to revoking the charter, as is required according to the obligations signed by the Palestinian Oslo team and the Government of Israel. This is because these obligations were never put to a debate by the PNC or any of the PLO's institutions, such as the Central Council or the PLO Executive Committee.

We, our people, and the whole world, including Israel, know that the PLO is not just a single party or organization. It is a broad national coalition that brings together, as its program explains, a broad national front comprised of all factions, parties, and individuals of various opinions. Thus, they are linked by common denominators. As we have been calling for since September 1991, the PNC should have met more than once to discuss developments, including Oslo-A, the Cairo agreement, and Oslo-B, as the Israelis did at their Knesset. They discussed Oslo-A, the Cairo agreement, and Oslo-B and put them to a vote. The PNC, however, has been kept out of the picture throughout these events.

Now Peres is calling for a PNC meeting in the occupied territories to revoke the charter. We say that the right to return is sacred and should not be subject to Israeli conditions. Let all the crossing points be opened, as they were to the supporters of Brother 'Arafat. We say clearly that holding a PNC meeting is an issue among Palestinians and that revoking the charter cannot be done in fulfillment of 'Arafat's obligations to Peres, as Peres wants.

The PLO Charter is an inter-Palestinian document. The PLO Charter is not a holy book; and it can be developed, but the decision to do so is up to our people and to the PNC members. We in the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] say that some sections of the National Charter are old and have been superseded ever since the DFLP put forward its new political platform for our people and for the PLO coalition in 1973. This platform was endorsed by the PNC session held in Cairo in June 1974.

Thus, it is all in our hands. Once again we say "no" to revoking the PLO Charter as long as the occupation and the construction of settlements continues, prisoners are held, people are deported, land is stolen, bypass roads are built, and new settlements are contemplated. The day before yesterday, for electioneering purposes [Israeli Minister] Binyamin Ben-Eli'ezer proposed building new settlements to appease right-wing extremist parties. All this is related to the Palestinian steps. We in the DFLP say that we are facing a new equation. We say "no" to revoking the PLO Charter under pressure from the

Israeli Government. Instead, we offer a new formula, namely, to develop the PLO Charter on the basis of the resolutions of the international legality. This clearly would secure our people's right to self-determination, an independent state, and a solution of the refugee problem in accordance with UN Resolution 194.

That is why we say that in return for amending the PLO Charter, Israel must develop its position, recognize the Palestinian people's right to self-determination in the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip and their right to establish an independent state. Israel must also recognize the need to solve the refugee question in line with UN Resolution 194. This is a balanced formula that renders unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's. It is a formula for a compromise based on UN resolutions and involving the establishment of an independent Palestinian state and solving the refugee problem according to Resolution 194. To succeed, this formula needs reassurances from Israel that it will halt its settlement activities, stop confiscating land and building auxiliary roads, release all prisoners and detainees beginning with our heroic women prisoners, and allow the return of all deportees, including the PNC members. In any event, we in the DFLP are ready to return immediately, but without any Israeli preconditions.

[Badwan] What will you do if all the concerned Arab parties reach agreements with Israel? What is your negotiating alternative?

[Hawatimah] The DFLP has a basic representation among the Palestinian public in the Palestinian West Bank, East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip because we have been one of the three major PLO components throughout PLO history—the others are the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Fatah. We are also represented in the ranks of our people in the diaspora. Now we have a fourth body with us, the brothers of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. Individual members might be living in this or that capital if they are forced to live in exile from their occupied homeland. 'Arafat and several of his colleagues lived in Tunis for many years. They concluded the Oslo agreement while still in Tunis in a process that was limited to three people: 'Arafat, Mahmud 'Abbas, and Brother Ahmad Quray'. We say clearly: We want to return to our country. In this context, the DFLP, as represented by its people inside the occupied land and in the diaspora, is willing to engage in comprehensive bilateral negotiations for a comprehensive agreement whose negotiating framework would be UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the land-for-peace principle, and the settling of the refugee problem in line with UN Resolution 194. On this basis, a comprehensive agreement would

be reached concerning Israeli withdrawal to the borders that existed prior to 4 June 1967. The agreement should enshrine the principle that their acquisition of our territory of the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and Gaza by force is unacceptable and that the refugee problem must be settled. In return, there would be total peace. From within the PNC, we have called for such a process. The PNC approved it in September 1991. The Tunis group, however, yielded to Yitzhaq Shamir's conditions, as was revealed in the recently published memoirs of former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. So that group violated both the PNC's and the UN's resolutions and allowed the final authority for the negotiations to go to the Israeli Government. We are renewing our call for comprehensive negotiations on a permanent solution based on the UN resolutions. The DFLP is ready to participate immediately in a process of balanced and comprehensive negotiations on a real compromise solution as outlined by Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and UN Resolution 194 on the settlement of the refugee issue. Refugees comprise 60 percent of the Palestinian diaspora and 50 percent of the population of the West Bank and Gaza, where they live in 29 camps. We are willing to begin bilateral negotiations immediately with a delegation chosen by free elections and who are not governed by preconditions, or with a delegation representing the PLO coalition factions. The core of the negotiations on a comprehensive solution should be the UN resolutions. As for implementation, this should be carried out according to a timetable and on the principle of full sovereignty over a portion of Palestinian territory in return for a measure of peace. The process would be crowned by the termination of the occupation, dismantling of the settlements, allowing our people self-determination, and solving the refugee problem in return for total peace between the state of Palestine and the state of Israel and their peoples. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Jordan Arrests Hamas-Affiliated Students

JN0902195696 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian
Arab Radio in Arabic 1730 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Reliable Palestinian sources said that Jordanian Intelligence officials arrested in the past few days about 10 Palestinian students from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip on the charge of affiliation with the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas. In a statement issued on Sunday [4 February], the Human Rights Defense Organization said that Jordanian Intelligence officials stormed the houses of students, known for their affiliation with the Islamic Movement, [words indistinct], arrested 10 of them and referred them to investigation centers. The sources added that the Jordanian Intelligence officials accused the students of organizing

student activities and issuing provocative leaflets against the Zionist enemy, something considered a clear and serious violation of Jordanian law [words indistinct]. The sources said the Jordanian Intelligence authorities prevented university students from visiting the detainees, who are being tortured [words indistinct].

Palestinian Affairs: Hamas Introduces Next Suicide Bomber at Rally

TA1002192896 *Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 10 Feb 96*

[Yoram Kohen video report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Nabulus has been reopened to Israelis following a large memorial rally for Yahya 'Ayyash held today by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]. Yoram Kohen reports:

[Kohen] Hamas took over al-Najah University in Nabulus today. Some 3,000 supporters defied the wintry weather to attend a rally in memory of Yahya 'Ayyash, alias The Engineer.

The first row was occupied by 'Ayyash's family — his parents, wife, and two sons — and by West Bank Hamas leaders. The climax of the rally was a parade of masked men, with most of them, incidentally, carrying toy guns. One of them was introduced to the audience as the next suicide operator who will stage an attack against the Israelis.

The rally was held with the approval and under the vigilant eye of the Palestinian Police and ended peacefully.

Palestinian Affairs: 'Arafat, Jihad Agree on Inquiry in al-Shati' Deaths

TA1102133496 *Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 11 Feb 96 pp 1, 22*

[Report by Tahir Shuraytah]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Gaza — AL-QUDS has learned that President Yasir 'Arafat and the leadership of the Islamic Jihad Movement in Palestine have agreed on setting up a commission of inquiry in order to bring to trial those involved in the killing of 'Ammar al-A'raj and Ayman al-Razayinah, members of the Islamic Jihad military wing, in the al-Shati' refugee camp on 3 February.

Shaykh Nafidh 'Azzam, Dr. Muhammad al-Hindi, Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Shami, and Ibrahim al-Najjar met with President 'Arafat two days ago in the presence of Jamal al-Surani, secretary of the PLO Executive Committee; Muhammad Dahlan, head of the Preventive Security Service in the Gaza Strip; presidential adviser Hani al-Hasan; and other officials.

At the meeting, it was decided that al-Surani and an Islamic Jihad official will head the commission of inquiry, which will question the individuals who participated in the murder and ascertain the conditions and circumstances surrounding the operation.

Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Shami, Islamic Jihad spokesman, said that bringing those involved to justice will ease tension in and restore calm to the Gaza Strip.

He added that his movement always endeavors to contain sedition and restrain those who perpetrate it in order to keep our people far from the arena of conspiracies and intrigues that seek to destroy them.

It has also been learned that the four Islamic Jihad leaders asked the president to release those who were detained in the course of this regrettable incident.

Dr. Muhammad al-Hindi, one of the movement's leaders, said that the committee heads will determine the commission's members and the details of its program, including the methods of interrogation and the procedures for determining the results. He added that the committee's work will not nullify the investigations of the attorney general's office.

Nabil Abu-Rudaynah, President 'Arafat's adviser, said that the meeting was positive and that President Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], is keen on maintaining national unity within the framework of democracy and political pluralism. The president also wants everyone to participate in building the homeland and urges all to shoulder the national responsibility. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs: Lebanon Officially Recognizes Palestinian Passport

JN0902151396 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 9 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The Republic of Lebanon officially recognized the Palestinian passport and began taking measures for the passport to be accepted and adopted by the competent authorities. These measures were circulated among all the Lebanese diplomatic missions abroad.

The Lebanese recognition came in a memorandum by Lebanese Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz to Arab League Secretary General 'Isamat 'Abd-al-Majid. So far, 52 states have acknowledged the Palestinian passport.

Palestinian Affairs: Cabinet Agrees To Confront Israeli Settlement Policy

JN1102090896 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
0700 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In its weekly meeting chaired by President Yasir 'Arafat, the Council of Ministers decided to call an immediate meeting of the Higher Joint Coordination Committee to discuss the Israeli settlement and expansion measures. In a statement issued following the meeting, the cabinet stressed the need for a popular drive to confront the Israeli settlement and expansion policy which is a flagrant violation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

The cabinet said the Israeli settlement activities are serious and totally violate what was agreed upon. The cabinet also decided to contact the cosponsors of the peace process, the United Nations, the EU, and the Nonaligned Movement to confront the settlement policy and protect the interests, rights, and property of citizens.

The cabinet declared tomorrow a national work day for all official and popular bodies to confront the confiscation of land and expansion of settlements under the pretext of building bypass roads.

The cabinet discussed the confiscation of land and expansion of settlements as well as the Israeli attacks against Jacob's Mosque, Rachel's Tomb, and the areas surrounding them.

The cabinet warned that the Israeli party's failure to adhere to its pledges and obligations will cause all the mutual obligations to collapse.

The cabinet announced a holiday for government departments and establishments in Palestine from 19 February, Monday, until 22 February, Thursday, to observe al-Fitr feast.

Palestinian Affairs: PA To Pardon Collaborators If Shin Bet Methods Revealed

TA1102071096 *Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew*
0500 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Abid al-'Abud, head of the collaborators' committee, says that 10 collaborators returned to the autonomy over the past month, after

the Palestinian Authority [PA] promised to pardon them if they revealed all they knew about the Shin Bet's operational methods. He told our correspondent Ilan Ro'e that the information the collaborators may divulge is liable to cause irreparable damage to the Shin Bet.

Palestinian Affairs: Swedish Foreign Minister Visits Orient House

JN1002165296 *Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic*
1400 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Swedish Foreign Minister Lena Hjelm-Wallen visited the Orient House, in occupied Jerusalem, today, despite Israeli authorities' opposition to this visit.

The Swedish minister met with Faysal al-Husayni, official in charge of Jerusalem file, to discuss the situation in the capital and the needs of the Palestinians in general.

During her meeting with President Yasir 'Arafat, Hjelm-Wallen announced that Sweden will give Palestine \$26 million in assistance.

Arab-Israeli Talks

Arab-Israeli: Rachel's Tomb Dispute To Be Settled at 'Political Level'

TA1102171696 *Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew*
1700 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A short time ago, at a meeting between Brigadier General Herzl Getz, head of Israel's security committee, and Palestinian Authority officials, it was agreed that the dispute between Israel and the Palestinians on the work being done at Rachel's Tomb will be settled at the political level. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that Israel announced that it is continuing work at the site in order to safeguard the Jewish worshippers.

The Palestinians closed the Bethlehem area to Israelis today because of the controversy. The mayor of Bethlehem convened a news conference and called on the Security Council to intervene.

Algeria**Algeria: 2 Separate Algiers Car Bombings Cause Over 84 Casualties***LD1102173696 Paris LCI Television in French
1700 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Appalling attacks have taken place in Algiers today: 14 people were left dead and around 30 injured this afternoon in the district of Belcourt, not far from the center, following the explosion of a car bomb, and more than 40 were injured, seven of them seriously, this morning, in an explosion of the same kind in the very deprived district of Bab El Oued. Since the beginning of Ramadan, just under a month ago, 54 people have been killed in Algeria and 180 injured. Nancy Reys reports:

[Reys] [passage omitted] At 1500 [1400 GMT] this afternoon in the district of Belcourt, where most of the big Algerian papers have their head offices, yet another car bomb went off, leaving a toll of 14 dead. The damage is extensive - the premises of the daily 'Le Soir' are reported to have been partly destroyed. All the signs are that these two attacks were carried out by the armed Islamist groups. [passage omitted]

[Announcer] We have just this minute learned that the second attack, this afternoon's attack has caused 17 deaths, according to the latest toll.

Algeria: Car Bomb Explodes During Algiers Rush Hour*LD1102113596 Paris France-Info Radio in French
1100 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] A car bomb exploded this morning near Bab El Oued's town hall in Algiers. About 40 people were injured, but the number of casualties could increase. The huge explosion was heard in central Algiers. Selim Batel reports from Algiers:

[Batel] The device went off in Bab El Oued, a crowded and poor district in central Algiers. The car had been parked near the town hall. For the time being there are only reports of injuries, but the final toll could be very heavy as the attack took place near a school and an apartment building. If one adds to this the fact that the bomb went off at 0900, rush hour, one can easily understand that the perpetrators wanted to do as much damage as possible.

In the last week, Ramadan has turned into a real nightmare for ordinary people, the terrorists' main targets.

Algeria: 2 Correspondents Killed in Algiers Bombing*LD1102234396 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 2300 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The explosion of a second car bomb in Algiers in less than 24 hours has left many people dead or wounded. [passage omitted]

However, according to a statement by the security services, there were two correspondents from 'LE SOIR D'ALGERIE' among the dead; they were Allaoua Ait M'barek, its editor-in-chief, and Mohamed Dourbane, an editor.

Algeria: Car Bomb Outside Medjana Police Station Kills 6*LD1002095396 Paris France-Inter Radio Network
in French 0900 GMT 10 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Some news just in: A booby-trapped car exploded in Algeria outside a police station in Medjana, 110 km southwest of Algiers [date not given]. It killed at least six people and injured 30, according to this morning's issue of the Algerian daily LIBERTE.

Algeria: Prime Minister Condemns Bomb Attacks*LD1102202096 Algiers ENTV Television Network
in Arabic 1900 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Following the criminal attack, Prime Minister Ahmed Ouyahia, who was accompanied by the ministers of interior, health, communication and culture went to Hassiba Benbouali avenue to see for himself the damage caused by the explosion. The head of government has made the following statement:

[Begin Ouyahia recording] At this very moment when one is trying to share in the suffering of our people, it is very difficult to make a statement. It is rather easier for one to express feelings. As I told your colleagues from other channels a while ago, today's car bomb attacks, either the odious terrorist one which took place in the working class district of Bab el Oued or this afternoon's attack against Maison de la Press, are both aimed at harming the Algerian people and its leading forces.

I can only say here that the Algerian nation as a whole is the target of those wanton acts; acts which have been strongly condemned by the Algerian people. The state is however determined to end such acts once and for all at any cost.

Furthermore, I have been told by my colleagues that a number of passers-by, some of them children, were killed in this attack. What one can do here is to be

vigilant and to his utmost to face up to this odious situation. Thank you. [end recording]

Algeria: Correspondent Assassinated by 'Armed Criminals'

*LD1102000196 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 2300 GMT 10 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A statement released by the security services yesterday [10 February] says that Mr. 'Abdallah Bouhachek, a correspondent at the weekly *REVOLUTION ET TRAVAIL*, the mouthpiece of the General Union of Algerian Workers, was assassinated at 0830 yesterday by armed criminals.

The same source added that the 44-year-old victim was gunned down by armed criminals in District 360 in Ouled Aich, in the province of Blida. [passage omitted]

Algeria: Permission Needed To Report 'Security Situation'

*LD1102162596 Paris France-2 Teletext in French
1402 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The Algerian Government has decided to set up "reading committees" at printing presses to check the way information on armed violence is being processed, several independent newspapers reported today.

The government has asked the papers not to publish information on the "security situation" without prior official confirmation. Algerian journalists have complained.

Algeria: UGTA Threatens Strike To Protest Wage Cuts

*LD1102192296 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 1800 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The main Algerian trade union has threatened to call for an industrial action.

The National Secretariat of the Algerian General Workers Union [UGTA] today held a meeting to discuss the head of government's decision to deduct [a day or several] days-worth of salaries from the wages of working people. The UGTA has decided to demand an annulment of such a decision and threatened to call for a two-day strike as a protest if the decision is not revoked.

Furthermore, in the case of a negative reply from the authorities, the national secretariat has also threatened to take further initiatives in the form of social, economic, and political demands to further workers' rights.

Algeria: Foreign Ministry Protests to Sweden Over Aid to Rebels

*LD1002204196 Algiers Radio Algiers Network
in Arabic 1800 GMT 10 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement released by the Foreign Ministry today says that the Algerian ambassador in Sweden has been asked to convey a strong protest to the Swedish authorities regarding the facilities offered to those who stand behind the terrorist operations in Algeria, and the undermining of the legitimate Algerian institutions. The same source says that behind this action, which spoils the nature of the cordial relations between Algeria and Sweden, lies an intention to interfere in the domestic affairs of Algeria. Algeria, the same source further says, rejects any interference in its domestic affairs.

The Foreign Ministry statement adds that the Swedish ambassador in Algeria has been summoned to the Foreign Ministry.

Egypt

Egypt: PLO's Qaddumi Arrives for Talks With Mubarak, Comments on Iraq Trip

*NC0902150296 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1430 GMT 9 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 9 Feb (MENA)—Faruq Qaddumi, the head of the PLO's Political Department, arrived in Cairo from Iraq this afternoon on a two-day visit to Egypt.

Qaddumi stated on arrival that he will meet President Husni Mubarak and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa to discuss developments in the Middle East peace process.

Qaddumi praised President Mubarak's role and efforts to ensure the success of the Arab peace tracks for the sake of a fair and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Regarding his visit to Iraq, Qaddumi said its objective was to get acquainted with the fraternal Iraqi people's suffering and to assert to this people that the Palestinian people and its leadership share their feelings and support them. He expressed his belief that the current conditions in Iraq confirm that there is a concrete improvement in the economic situation and that the Arab climate shows hope of achieving Arab reconciliation.

Egypt: PLO's Faruq Qaddumi Leaves After 2-Day Visit

*NC1102102996 Cairo MENA in Arabic
0930 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Feb (MENA)—Faruq Qaddumi, head of the PLO's Political Department, left

Cairo this morning after a two-day visit to Egypt. During the visit, Qaddumi met with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and discussed a number of important issues.

Egypt: Musa, Yemeni Minister View al-Hanish Dispute, Arbitration

NC1002141696 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa received a telephone call from Yemeni Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Iryani.

They exchanged views on the latest developments in the dispute between Yemen and Eritrea over al-Hanish Island. The leaders discussed a French initiative for an arbitration agreement to solve the Yemeni-Eritrean dispute peacefully. It has been proposed that the arbitration agreement be ratified in France.

Egypt: Mubarak Returns From Saudi Arabia

NC1102150196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1422 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Feb (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak returned to Cairo from Jeddah this afternoon after a 24-hour visit to Saudi Arabia. During his visit, President Mubarak performed a minor pilgrimage and held talks with Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, crown prince, deputy prime minister, and head of the Saudi National Guard, who is entrusted with running the country's affairs. The talks dealt with bilateral relations and current Arab issues.

President Mubarak was accompanied on this visit by Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif; Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa; Manpower Minister Ahmad al-'Amawi; Awqaf Minister Dr. Hamdi Zaquq; head of the Presidential Office Dr. Zakariya 'Azmi; and Dr. Usamah al-Baz, foreign ministry first under secretary and director of the president's office for political affairs.

Egypt: Mubarak, Eritrean President Hold Talks

NC1102163996 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1605 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Feb (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak and Eritrean President Isaias Afworki held a private round of talks at the Presidential Office in Heliopolis this evening.

They discussed the development of the Yemeni-Eritrean conflict over the al-Hanish al-Kabir island, Egyptian and international mediation on this issue, several African issues, and other matters of mutual interest.

The Eritrean president is accompanied on this visit by a delegation that includes Foreign Minister Petros

Solomon, Trade and Industry Minister Ogbe Abraha, Burhani Abrahi, an economic adviser, and Eritrean Ambassador to Cairo Muhammad Oharo.

Egypt: Mubarak, Eritrean President Discuss Dispute With Yemen

NC1102194996 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1920 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Feb (MENA)—Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif has stated that talks between President Mubarak and Eritrean President Isaias Afworki this evening focused on the Yemeni-Eritrean dispute.

He said the talks, which resumed over a fast-breaking banquet, discussed the efforts Egypt is making to contain the crisis peacefully and eliminate the obstacles hindering a meeting between the two sides to explain their views.

The Egyptian information minister added that President Mubarak is resuming his efforts and making contacts with Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih to bring views closer and make progress on the suggested solutions.

Egypt: Eritrean President Leaves After Talks With Mubarak

NC1202073196 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0330 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 12 Feb (MENA)—Eritrean President Isaias Afworki left Cairo early this morning after a one-day visit to Egypt. President Husni Mubarak held talks with President Afworki last night. The two presidents discussed developments in Africa, with particular emphasis on the Yemeni-Eritrean dispute over the island of al-Hanish al-Kabir and Egypt's efforts to find a peaceful solution to this dispute.

Egypt: Official Denounces U.S. Efforts To 'Topple' Iraqi Regime

MM0902160796 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 9 Feb 96 p 4

[Report by Muhammad 'Allam: "Egypt Considers U.S. Efforts To Topple Iraqi Regime 'Violation' of International Charters"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo — In what is considered the toughest Egyptian stand against U.S. policy in the region, an authoritative Egyptian source has stressed to AL-HAYAH his country's rejection of any schemes designed to topple any Arab regime.

The source criticized the statements made by U.S. Defense Secretary William Perry, who announced on Tuesday [6 February] that efforts are being made to speed up the downfall of the Iraqi regime. Because these efforts "conflict with the rules of international law and the principle of noninterference in internal affairs." The source warned that "opening the door to such efforts to topple the Iraqi regime would mean it would not be the first and last time." [passage omitted]

The Egyptian official told AL-HAYAH that "no Arab state would agree to implicate itself in such (U.S.) efforts or to blatantly and openly violate all Arab and international charters and moral principles."

The official stressed "the constants of Egyptian policy, namely not to interfere in the internal affairs of other states or to get involved in such games, since the Iraqi regime (remaining in power) is a matter that concerns the Iraqi people only."

The official denounced the resumption of the talk of toppling the Iraqi regime "when the Iraqi Government has begun to take important steps in response to the resolutions of international legitimacy to speed up the process of lifting the international economic sanctions." The Egyptian official repeatedly pointed to former U.S. President George Bush's backtracking on the idea of the coalition forces entering Baghdad during the Gulf war and toppling the regime of President Saddam Husayn "because of President Husni Mubarak's rejection of such an action."

An Arab League source has expressed the League's concern over the U.S. Administration's call for toppling the Iraqi regime. The source said that "the regime in Iraq is a question that concerns the Iraqi people, and Saddam's remaining in power or his replacement is an internal affair."

The source stressed to AL-HAYAH the need for Iraq to comply with the international resolutions. The source expressed the hope that the talks between Baghdad and the United Nations would succeed, in order to implement Resolution 986 and lift the suffering from the Iraqi people. The source stressed the "safeguarding of Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity." [passage omitted]

Egypt: Parliamentary Committee Statement of 'Concern' Over Sudan

NC1202070796 Cairo MENA in English
2159 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo Feb 11 (MENA)—The People's Assembly's Arab Affairs Committee has voiced deep concern over the Sudanese regime-

sponsored dastardly terrorist act against President Husni Mubarak's life in Addis Ababa last year.

This came in a statement released by the committee at the end of its meeting this evening. The statement added that the committee is closely following up Sudan's disregard of the Ethiopian request to extradite to Addis Ababa those involved in the failed assassination attempt.

The statement clarified that President Husni Mubarak has always been asking the Sudanese regime to stop sponsoring terrorism and sheltering terrorists donning the cloak of Islam, a religion which is a far cry from their allegations.

The statement noted that Egypt has requested the Sudanese regime to stop provocative acts against the Egyptian property in Sudan.

This widely-denounced attitude adopted by the government of Sudan will admittedly lead to the ostracism of Sudan from its neighbours and the world countries, a state in which the Sudanese people will be the sole loser, added the statement.

Egypt: AL-AHRAM Comments on Egypt-Saudi-Jordan Summit

NC1102071996 Cairo MENA in Arabic
2200 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 10 Feb (MENA)—The Cairo newspaper AL-AHRAM reports that a tripartite summit will be held on Sunday [11 February] between President Husni Mubarak, King Fahd Ibn-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques, and Jordanian King Husayn.

In the issue of tomorrow, Sunday, AL-AHRAM says that Saudi Crown Prince 'Abdallah will attend the summit.

The paper notes that the talks at the summit will focus on promoting Arab cooperation and eliminating the negative aspects of the Gulf war. AL-AHRAM adds that the recent Saudi cabinet meeting called for establishing sound bases for Arab solidarity that would achieve unity in the Arab ranks and promote the Arabs' hopes for security, prosperity, and stability.

AL-AHRAM goes on to say that the tripartite summit will discuss the developments in the Middle East peace process and the situation in the Gulf and the Red Sea regions.

The paper says that the Egyptian-Saudi talks will focus on strengthening the relations between the two countries and on giving impetus to their cooperation in the various economic, trade, and cultural fields.

Egypt: Commentary on Cautious Optimism Over Peace*NC0902163896 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 9 Feb 96*

[Commentary by Zayn al-Ja'fari: "A Peace Agreement With Syria Depends on the Extent of Israel's Commitment to the Basics of Peace"]

[FBIS Translated Text] All developments in the Middle East and the statements U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher made during his 17th tour of the region call for optimism tempered with caution, particularly in connection with negotiations on the Syrian-Israeli track, slated to begin on 26 February and continue for two weeks in Maryland.

Syria is still being reserved, until all dimensions of the Israeli position finally clear up. We have to explain this caution-tempered optimism. It is clear so far that the peace process is proceeding along the right course. Christopher would not have agreed to make a new tour of the region if he had no basic points to discuss with the Syrian and Israeli sides. Before the last round, U.S. President Bill Clinton said that he was optimistic over the prospects for peace between Syria and Israel. The Israeli prime minister announced that the two sides have laid down an important basis for a peace agreement and that on this basis the process should be completed.

Moreover, the resumption of negotiations in itself proves that progress has been made on the road to peace between Syria and Israel, in spite of the persisting harsh difficulties that should be eliminated before a peace agreement is reached. This might be the reason underlying Syria's reservation. It might be waiting for Israel's final stance to clear up.

It seems that concrete progress on the Syrian-Israeli track will only be made after the Israeli elections, slated for 28 May instead of late October, are held. Regardless of the earlier date of the Israeli elections and the results they might produce, the principles of peace in the region remain unchanged. These principles collectively depend on the land-for-peace principle. Since the Madrid summit, Syria has insisted on Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights. The Syrian officials statements in this context explained that the time factor, important as it is, will not be an instrument of pressure against Syria. Hence, peace between Syria and Israel depends on full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights and on the principle that the Syrian sovereignty and fixed rights must not be affected by the security arrangements Israel demands.

Our hopefulness concerning the prospects of making concrete peace on the Syrian-Israeli track was prompted

by the change in the Israeli line since Shim'on Peres took office. The Israeli tone changed and there was talk about the possibility of withdrawal in return for sufficient security guarantees for Israel. Add to this the active U.S. role, which makes sure that negotiations will continue between Syria and Israel.

However, we have to say that making a tangible peace that leads to a peace agreement between the two sides by the end of the year depends basically on the commitment to the basics of peace by any Israeli Government, regardless of its party affiliation. After all, these basics have nothing to do with the partisan policies in Israel.

Egypt: Finance Minister on Impending IMF Accord*NC1102080596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2210 GMT 10 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 10 Feb (MENA)—Finance Minister Dr. Muhyi al-Din al-Gharib has stated that an agreement will be signed with the IMF team during its visit to Cairo soon. The agreement will provide for writing off the remaining segment of the Paris Club debts, amounting to \$4 billion. He stressed that this step will save Egypt about \$200 million, which is the cost of servicing of these debts.

In a statement to AL-AHRAM, the minister said that the IMF is fully convinced by the Egyptian Government's economic reform policies. He said that there is no justification for devaluing the Egyptian pound, stressing that the ministry's current policy is based on linking the tax policies with investment policies in a bid to promote the private sector's participation, increase new investments, and provide job opportunities. [passage omitted]

Libya**Libya: Official—Contacts With Europe on Lockerbie 'Positive'***LD1002205996 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1830 GMT 10 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Tripoli, 10 Feb — The General People's Congress resumed its proceedings at al-Wafa' Hall in the town of Sirte this morning in order to draw up the final draft for the resolutions which had been adopted by the Basic People's Congresses in their ordinary session for 1994. [passage omitted]

When the plenary moved to debate matters raised by the Basic People's Congresses and by the General People's Committee for Popular Control and Follow-Up of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and

International Cooperation, the brother secretary of Foreign Affairs at the General People's Congress Secretariat read out the report of the Committee for Popular Control on the work of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation. He was followed by the secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation, who answered queries and took note of the observations of the Basic People's Congresses and Popular Control.

The secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation contributed to the debate on foreign policy, saying: The General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation has tirelessly followed Libya's claim that Italy should pay compensation to Libyans who suffered during the Italian occupation of the country at all international forums and that such a claim has always been tabled as a single motion at the annual meeting of the UN General Assembly. [passage omitted]

Regarding the so-called Lockerbie case, the brother secretary of the General People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation pointed out the support that Great Jamahiriya's position on this issue has been receiving at regional and international organizations.

He indicated, moreover, that the Great Jamahiriya's favorable reaction to the initiative of the Arab League has bolstered its position at international organizations.

Furthermore, he recalled the fact that both the Arab League and the OAU have set up respectively a seven-man committee and a five-man committee to follow up this case, and pointed out the interest shown by both regional and international organizations in this case as well as their solidarity and support for the Great Jamahiriya.

He stressed that these positions supporting the Great Jamahiriya have been crowned with the resolution taken by the Nonaligned Movement conference recently held in Cartagena, Colombia, which pointed out that should the Western states concerned with the so-called Lockerbie case fail to respond to the initiatives made in this context, then the Nonaligned Movement member states will not implement the resolution of the Nonaligned Movement [as heard]

He pointed out that American obduracy has prevented the implementation of any measures to resolve this issue despite the large-scale support enjoyed by the Great Jamahiriya at the Security Council and the UN General Assembly, and on the part of regional and international

organizations, including the Arab League, the OAU, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and the Nonaligned Movement. He stressed that most world countries support the position of the Great Jamahiriya in this case, including many European states which have refused to take any additional unjust measures against the Great Jamahiriya.

He underlined that contacts have been made with the British and French governments, which had a positive effect on this case, and he stressed that the fact that the position of the European states in this issue took into account their interests in their relations with the Great Jamahiriya leaves America standing alone in confronting the pro-Libyan European and international position.

Libya: al-Qadhafi Urges PFLP Leaders To Return to 'Occupied Palestine'

LD1002160796 Tripoli JANA in Arabic
1510 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tripoli, 10 Feb — The brother leader of the revolution today received the leaders of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine [PFLP], brothers Taysir Qubb'ah, Abu Ali Mustafa, Abu Ahmad Fu'ad, and Umar Qutaysh.

The brother leader urged the [Palestinian] leaders to return to occupied Palestine and to exercise their militant role from within and not to oppose from abroad.

Libya: New Niger Leader Thanks al-Qadhafi for Support

LD0902185696 Tripoli JANA in Arabic
1745 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Tripoli, 9 Feb (JANA)— The brother leader of the revolution has received 'Abd-al-Rahman Saibou, member of the National Salvation Council of Niger, and Nias Almahdi, director of the Defense Ministry [names and titles as received], who handed the brother leader of the revolution a written message from Ibrahim Barre Mainassara, chairman of the National Salvation Council of Niger. In the message, Ibrahim Barre Mainassara affirms the strong relations between the two fraternal countries, and expresses his thanks and appreciation to the brother leader of the revolution and the Libyan Arab people for the support given to the brotherly people of Niger.

The chairman of the National Salvation Council of Niger also stressed that the people of Niger will continue to stand on the side of the Great Jamahiriya and to support it in its confrontation of the unjust measures imposed on it.

Sudan**Sudan: Government To Seek OAU Help To Find Egyptian Suspects***AB1002204496 Paris AFP in French
1927 GMT 10 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Khartoum, 10 Feb (AFP) — The Sudanese Government will contact the OAU to try to localize the three Egyptian fundamentalists whom Ethiopia is demanding as part of investigations in the attempt against Husni Mubarak, the Sudanese justice minister said today. The Sudanese judiciary yesterday issued a warrant of arrest against the three Egyptian fundamentalists accused by Ethiopia of being implicated in the foiled attempt against President Husni Mubarak in Addis Ababa last June. Mr. 'Abd-al-Aziz Shiddu stressed that his government would welcome any information that would lead to localize the suspects "if they were really in Sudan." [passage omitted]

Quoted by the official Sudanese news agency SUNA, the Sudanese Foreign Ministry today stressed the country's commitment to international bilateral agreements.

Sudan: Contacts With OAU, UN Maintained in Search for Suspects*EA1202104196 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio
Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 12 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Mr. 'Abd-al-Aziz Shiddu, minister of justice and attorney general, has said that Sudan will continue to maintain contacts with the OAU and the United Nations in order to prove its seriousness and cooperation in attempts to find the suspects involved in the assassination attempt of the Egyptian president, who are thought to be in Sudan. Mr. Shiddu promised that the relevant bodies will continue to put out public notices so that citizens can assist in apprehending the three suspects, assuming they are in Sudan.

His excellency reiterated Sudan's readiness to welcome any dialogue or contacts which might contribute toward resolving this matter. He pointed out that Sudan had, from the very start, condemned the assassination attempt, and promised full cooperation with the OAU mechanism for conflict resolution in Africa, in a bid to find a solution to the problem within an African and not an international context. [passage omitted]

It is worth mentioning that a committee headed by the general prosecutor, including police and judicial representatives, was formed a day after receiving an Ethiopian demand for the extradition of the suspects, who are reported to be in Sudan. Mr. Shiddu further said that the Sudanese authorities received the Ethiopian extradition request 33 days after the incident.

Sudan: Regime's Call for Suspects' Surrender Termed 'Desperate Attempt'*NC1202115096 Cairo MENA in English
1055 GMT 12 Feb 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, Feb 12 (MENA)—Khartoum regime's call upon the three suspects in the Addis Ababa attempt on the life of President Husni Mubarak to turn themselves in is only a desperate attempt and an overt trick to make the world believe that it does not know their hideouts, member of the Sudanese Democratic Unionist Party and information officer at its office here Muhammad al-Mu'tasim said today.

Al-Mu'tasim warned that Khartoum will not turn over the three suspects in fear of revealing its involvement in the matter and of the revenge of extremist Islamic groups. The Sudanese regime is guilty whether criminals were found to be hiding in Khartoum or not and whether the Sudanese government extradited them to Ethiopia or not, al-Mu'tasim said.

The prime suspect is the Sudanese regime and Secretary General of the so-called Arab Islamic Conference Hasan al-Turabi, who masterminded the whole operation, al-Mu'tasim said. He accused Deputy Defense Minister Brigadier al-Fatih 'Urwah; former Interior Minister Brigadier al-Tayyib Muhammad Khayr, who is the current minister of labor; and Dr. Nafi 'Ali Nafi', director of security at the time of the treacherous attempt, of being involved in the foiled attack.

Speaking about the planned Sudanese presidential and legislative elections, he said that the people will boycott the polling because they refuse to take part in a farce staged by a government that has starved and displaced them and turned their country into a hotbed of terrorism.

Sudan: Justice Ministry Orders 3 Egyptian Suspects To Surrender*EA0902171696 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio
Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 9 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Criminology Department of the Attorney General's Office at the Justice Ministry has called on the three Egyptian nationals, accused of participation in the assassination attempt against Egyptian President Husni Mubarak in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in June 1995, to give themselves up. The Ethiopian authorities assume they have infiltrated into Sudan.

The public prosecutor, Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahman Ibrahim al-Khalifah, issued notices to the fugitive suspects, if present in Sudan, to hand themselves over to the nearest police station within a period of not more than a week.

as of the date of publication of this notice. He also urged citizens to assist in apprehending the suspects.

In the notice, the public prosecutor said that despite a failure to find the suspects, since the publication of earlier notices on 29 June and 5 August, the Attorney General's Office has had to issue this latest notice, in line with Article 78 of the Criminal Procedure Act 1991, and in accordance with the extradition of criminals agreement between Sudan and Ethiopia in existence since 1966. [passage omitted]

Sudan: Opposition Reports Clashes on Ethiopian Border

NC1002203596 *Cairo MENA in English*
2005 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Nairobi Feb. 10 (MENA)—Reliable sources of the southern Sudanese opposition have confirmed reports on the existence of military clashes on the Sudanese-Ethiopian borders over the past days.

The sources remarked that only the governments of Ethiopia and Sudan have details on these clashes.

The sources told MENA this evening that Sudanese-backed anti Ethiopian government Islamic Front has escalated operations against the Ethiopian Army near the borders with Ethiopia.

Sudan: Garang Forces Clash With Ugandan Opposition

MM0902161396 *London AL-HAYAH in Arabic*
9 Feb 96 p 7

[Report by Yusuf Khazim in Kampala: "Battles Between Garang's Forces and Armed Ugandan Opposition"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Sudanese forces opposed to the Khartoum government clashed with elements opposed to the Kampala government inside southern Sudanese territory in battles lasting many hours last week, while a leader of the Ugandan civilian opposition has said that he has evidence that 60 tanks have entered southern Sudan from Tanzania, via Ugandan territory.

Ugandan Military sources in Kampala have stressed to AL-HAYAH that the fighting erupted last Wednesday [31 January] between forces of the "Nile West Bank Forces" led by former Ugandan Army Colonel Juma Uris [name as transliterated] and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement led by Col. John Garang [name as transliterated] in the areas of Kajo Kaji and Dudlib [name as transliterated] in the Eastern Equatorial province and in the city of Mangalatori [name as transliterated] in the same province, some 32 km from the Ugandan border. The battles resulted in nearly 50 people killed among the

Ugandan opposition forces and many wounded among Garang's forces. [passage omitted]

Sudan: al-Turabi Calls For Improved U.S. Ties

EA0902151396 *Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic* 1900 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The leader of the Nation of Islam from the United States, Mr. Louis Farrakhan, has stressed that the nation of Islam would confront the conspiracies and challenges facing it.

Addressing a news conference this afternoon at the Friendship Hall in Khartoum, he said Sudan was capable of overcoming the trials that face it through its commitment to Islam. In this context, he referred to the west's fear of Islam. He stressed that Sudan's unity makes it a great power among African states. He called on all Muslim states to reconcile and unite their ranks.

Farrakhan criticized the warning sent to him by the U.S. Embassy in Khartoum not to visit Sudan. He emphasized that there was security in Sudan and that the country lived peacefully with all nations.

He affirmed that the Muslims in the United States would support the cause of the Sudan and the Sudanese nation. Louis Farrakhan spoke about the importance of the Koran and the need to adhere and abide by it. [passage omitted]

The secretary general of the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference Dr. Hasan Abdullah al-Turabi, also spoke at the news conference and hailed Muslims in the west. He pointed out the need for Muslims in all countries to remain in touch. He stressed that Sudan and the United States were linked by strong bridges that could not be ignored. He said there was a need to overcome all the difficulties affecting relations between the two countries.

Sudan: Electoral Official Discusses Elections in South

EA1102203396 *Khartoum SUNA in Arabic*
1600 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Juba, 11 Feb (SUNA) — The chairman of the High Electoral Committee in Bahr al-Jabal state, the state government's secretary general, has said that holding elections for the presidency of the Republic and the National Assembly in the equatoria states is an unprecedented event, which former governments, since independence, have failed to achieve.

In a statement to SUNA, following the oath-taking on 10 February by members of the branch electoral committees, his excellency said the current democratic exercise in the country reaffirmed the Sudanese nation's

adherence to federal rule, and was a rejection of options which opposed the values of the Sudanese people.

The chairman of the High Electoral Committee discussed the enthusiasm of the citizens of the equatoria states to take part in the elections process. He said that citizens of Bahr al-Jabal state were the first to endorse the nomination of staff Lieutenant General al-Bashir for the presidency of the Republic. [passage omitted]

The chairman of the higher committee added that a delegation composed of members of the committee would visit constituencies daily to supervise the election process and work to avoid irregularities that might affect fairness and neutrality during elections.

He announced that his state was adhering to the declared elections timetable. He called on the citizens to exercise their democratic right in order to achieve the aims of the revolution in attaining peace from within, and promote development and construction. [passage omitted]

Sudan: Official Says Too Many Presidential Candidates

AB1202111496 Paris AFP in English
0928 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Khartoum, 12 Feb (AFP) — There are too many candidates standing for president in Sudan's upcoming general elections, with over 50 hopefuls running against leader 'Umar al-Bashir, the elections committee head said on Monday [12 February].

The daily AL-INGAZ AL-WATANI reported that more than 50 people had entered the presidential race, causing a delay in the publication of candidates lists which were supposed to have appeared on Sunday but are now hoped for Monday. The head of the elections commission 'Abd-al-Mun'im al-Zayn al-Nahas called on "some of the candidates to withdraw voluntarily from the race." "The commission will meet with each candidate individually to ascertain his seriousness in running," said Nahas, quoted in the daily AL-RAI AL-AKHER.

The large number of candidates "will pose difficulties for the committee in assigning election symbols to each one and in doing the polling," he said. Each candidate is given a symbol which will be placed on campaign posters and ballots so that illiterate voters can recognize him.

President al-Bashir invited opponents to run against him in the presidential and parliamentary vote, set for early March, the country's first since al-Bashir came to power in a 1989 military coup. Nahas said local "reconciliation committees" would sift out candidates in the parliamentary race if their numbers got too large as well.

The 16 northern states have published lists of legislative candidates while nominations in the 10 southern states are still unfinished, the daily AL-SUDAN AL-HADITH said. The paper said 493 candidates were running for 71 seats in five of the northern states, including Khartoum, but it did not give numbers for the remaining states.

Sudan: 'Terrorists' Said Used To Suppress Student Riots

NC1102204796 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1925 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 11 Feb (MENA)—The Cairo branch of the Sudanese Human Rights Organization has declared that it has reliable information indicating that the Sudanese Government used Iranian and Afghan terrorists and members of the Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] movement to suppress Sudanese students.

The organization said in a statement today that these elements, with the help of the National Islamic Front in Sudan, used bullets and knives against demonstrators and killed a number of students and citizens.

The organization has substantiated information that Sudanese President 'Umar al-Bashir summoned Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahman Abu-Zayd, director of Omdurman University, in late December and threatened him with closing the university if he did not issue an immediate decision expelling all the professors al-Bashir himself had expelled from Khartoum and other universities for political reasons.

The organization has received a report naming the citizens the security forces detained in the ghost houses. They were subjected to the most dreadful types of torture to coerce them into revealing information the authorities could use against them in courts later on.

Bahrain

Bahrain: Bomb Explodes in 'Major' Hotel, Wounds 3

NC1102204096 Paris AFP in English
2015 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Manama, Feb 11 (AFP) - A home-made bomb exploded in a major hotel of the Bahraini capital on Sunday [11 February], wounding three guests, in the second such attack within a month, officials said. The bomb shattered windows in The Diplomat hotel, but the wounded were not in serious condition, the officials said. The hotel's 100 guests were evacuated and police cordoned off the building.

The last explosion at a Manama hotel took place on January 17 at Le Meridien during an international economic conference. Another home-made bomb, hidden in a basement toilet, caused no injuries. Bahraini authorities announced last month the arrest of several people who set off grenades in commercial centres of the capital.

The Gulf state has been shaken by political unrest since the arrest in December 1994 of a Shiite Muslim cleric demanding the restoration of parliament, which was suspended in 1975. At least 13 people were killed in clashes between security forces and demonstrators. After a lull since April, fresh troubles erupted last December after the Sunni Muslim-led authorities banned political rallies in mosques.

'Bahrain Liberation Front' Claims Hotel Blast

NC1102213096 London ABC Television in Arabic
2100 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] It was a bad day for both Bahrain and Algeria. In the second terrorist explosion in Bahrain in less than one month, three persons were wounded in an operation claimed by a group calling itself the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain in a telephone contact with the ASSOCIATED PRESS.

Authorities in Bahrain have reassured the people that calm now prevails around the hotel targeted by the explosion, which is in a neighborhood inhabited mostly by diplomats.

The explosion occurred this evening in The Diplomat hotel in downtown Manama. Immediately the police cordoned off the area surrounding the hotel, which is a center for banks, government offices, and diplomatic missions.

In a telephone contact MBC held with an official in the Bahraini Ministry of Information, we were told that the explosion was caused by a locally-made incendiary

sound bomb that shattered the windows of the hotel's lobby and the ground floor.

The Bahraini official added that the bomb was placed near the hotel's electric transformer and that it caused slight injuries to three persons. He added that normalcy has been restored completely at the scene of the explosion, which he described as another terrorist and sabotage attempt.

A man has contacted the ASSOCIATED PRESS, saying that he represents the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain. He claimed the front's responsibility for the explosion.

An explosion occurred on 17 January as a result of a homemade bomb placed in the Royal Meridien Hotel in Manama. The explosion caused slight damage and some injuries.

'Bahrain Liberation Front' Condemns Violence

NC1202081596 Paris AFP in English
0743 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] Manama, Feb 12 (AFP)—Two Bahrainis and a Sri Lankan were wounded when a home-made bomb exploded in a luxury hotel in the second such attack here within a month, officials said Monday [12 February].

They said the Diplomat Hotel's Bahraini security guard remained in hospital following the explosion late Sunday that also damaged the lobby and computer room.

Americans, British, Saudis and Indians were staying at the hotel in the center of Manama but none of them was reported hurt. Nobody has claimed responsibility for the attack.

The hotel's 100 guests were evacuated and police cordoned off the building. Some of the guests spent the night in another hotel, officials said.

In a statement sent to AFP in Nicosia, the Bahrain Liberation Front condemned violence and said it supported a peaceful solution to the political crisis in Bahrain. [passage omitted]

Bahrain: Papers Comment on Hotel Explosion

JN1202100296 Manama WAKH in Arabic
0600 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] [Words indistinct] The paper [AKHBAR AL-KHALIJ] says that security forces have shown they can end all sabotage operations and that any attempt to harm the country's security and stability will be nipped in the bud.

The paper says that those who intentionally seek to harm tourism, undermine the economic gains the people have scored with their sweat, terrorize the citizens and the residents, and defame the homeland cannot but be terrorists.

The paper adds that only factions that known foreign parties encourage and manipulate are capable of carrying out such terrorist actions. The Arab countries and the other countries in the world have unanimously agreed to isolate and contain these foreign parties and impose international punishment on them.

The paper says it is confident that the Bahraini people will stand united against any tampering with the homeland and that they are more than eager to protect their achievements and to support their leadership in its endeavor to realize economic and social progress.

Commenting on the incident, AL-AYYAM says that with these reprehensible terrorist actions that all factions of the people condemn, the forces of darkness will not scare this homeland and will not dissuade its sons from pursuing their bountiful march toward construction and development. The paper says that planting incendiary bombs in public places to terrorize citizens and residents is rejected and is a useless method that will not fulfill the perpetrators' objective of halting economic development in this country.

The paper says: What is the meaning of detonating an incendiary or sound bomb in a public place like a hotel or a marketplace? Has it any other meaning than that of terrorizing the citizens and checking the homeland's aspirations?

The paper emphasizes that Bahrainis will not stand idly by to watch a misguided faction, receiving instructions and material and media support from abroad, destroy this homeland. The Bahraini people who have learned to work together for construction and development will always be united against the terrorist remnants and those who carry out destruction and sabotage.

The paper says: The terrorist operations that are being carried out here and in the world target entire mankind. The entire world should confront terrorism and those who back it, and those who justify these actions and support them.

Bahrain: Heir Apparent Discusses Domestic, Regional Issues

MM1202153196 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 10 Feb 96 p 17

[Interview with Bahraini Heir Apparent Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah by 'Uthman al-'Umayr in Manama; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] [al-'Umayr] The shaykh began by talking about the situation.

[Al Khalifah] I can tell you that we enjoy a high degree of stability in the country as a whole and between citizens, thanks primarily to the paternal care of our father Shaykh 'Isa, who is the father of all, and thanks to the maturity of our people, who have rejected interference in their internal affairs by a misled few who do not belong to this country.

If you ask me about evidence of interference in our internal affairs I would mention the foreign media campaigns, which provide the best proof of what we say. Thank God, the design against security and stability has been foiled.

After that happy conclusion we decided not to answer the media campaigns and not to indulge in altercations with a fraternal state that, like us, is a member of the [Gulf] Cooperation Council [GCC]. Yes, we decided not to answer because that would not be in their interest, and we demand reciprocal treatment. At any rate, Bahrain's security is an integral part of the security of the Gulf, which shares a common fate and faces the same common enemy.

[Al-'Umayr] Shaykh Hamad was clearly referring to Qatar, whose press came out calling for democracy and pluralism in Bahrain. That was resented by the Bahrainis.

How do you view the reactions of the Arab and non-Arab states?

[Al Khalifah] We felt that they treated the country as their own, which is not strange from the states which have been supportive. That stems from great concern for Bahrain's safety, which means stability for everyone. This is an opportunity for me to thank them for their feelings and for their condemnation and for their continuous willingness to support us. That puts on our shoulders the responsibility and duty of returning the favor twofold.

[Al-'Umayr] Your highness, there is a call for a return to democracy. What is preventing that?

[Al Khalifah] Return to democracy! We are a part of our Arab Gulf. We will not surpass the brothers and we will

not lag behind anything they do. Our present is the same and our future is the same. We have joint security and defense agreements. It is difficult to singularly introduce frameworks and methods alien to our societies. So the method has been the shura method in the GCC, and development continues in all aspects of life. We cannot wear foreign attire, and if we did we should wear what is good for us.

But our life is 100 percent democratic, and we have a clear conscience on that score. The party who is not happy is the enemy of the region who does not want stability and continuity for it.

[Al-'Umayr] So you will not answer the media campaigns in this connection?

[Al Khalifah] If you are referring to what is taking place around us, we are committed to a charter we signed in the GCC, and I believe that integration and federation can only take place through harmony and cohesion between the Gulf states. As regards democracy, blessed is one who knows his real value.

[Al-'Umayr] What is the actual magnitude of the events which occurred in Bahrain.

[Al Khalifah] They were perpetrated by a small misleading group and did not reflect overwhelming support. The proof is that you are here and you can see and hear. It should be noted that they were quickly apprehended by members of the public. Members of the public are the ones who report them.

[Al-'Umayr] You have mentioned foreign interference. Have you identified who you mean by that, and did you find that their confessions denoted their foreign affiliation?

[Al Khalifah] We leave their confessions to the judiciary, which will determine that matter.

[Al-'Umayr] Speaking of the judiciary, will the defendants get a fair trial?

[Al Khalifah] We are proud of our judicial system. It has its rules and regulations and it is the oldest judicial system in the region, one of the oldest in the Middle East as a matter of fact. It was introduced in 1921, that is, the early twenties when the modern foundations of a civilian state were laid down. They are well advanced in the region. The judiciary is independent, as stipulated in Bahrain's constitution. Casting doubt on a judicial system with such a record is unacceptable. It should be noted here that the government was careful in addressing these matters because it did not want to influence the course of justice where there are defense lawyers for the defendants.

[Al-'Umayr] It has been said that events in Bahrain are an indivisible part of the events in the region, that is the Middle East, in the sense that the Iranian factor, which is losing its positions in the north, wants to provoke in the Gulf.

[Al Khalifah] That may be a part of what is happening in the region. What we know is that this is a targeted region and ambitions are in constant motion. What I can say is that what happened in Bahrain is over. Other things might occur, but we are very vigilant and there is no alternative to solidarity among all, particularly as such events bring us closer together.

[Al-'Umayr] Do you agree with those who claim that Hizballah has moved its operations and bases to the Gulf?

[Al Khalifah] What I believe is that Hizballah has become a political party. It no longer has any other option, and I do not imagine that it will choose the path of violence. It is in the process of a radical change. The problem is that those who had been given military training by that party's leadership may head for numerous parts of the world after the party got rid of them and expelled them to several states. The Gulf region may be one of these areas.

Apart from that, I believe that it is not in the party's interest to swim against the current.

[Al-'Umayr] Of course, we know that there is security coordination with the rest of region. Has the pace of that coordination increased?

[Al Khalifah] Coordination is continuing. Bahrain is enthusiastic about this because there should be no letup on security. Without security there can be no development or stability, particularly as terrorism is now worldwide and not confined to any region to the exclusion of another.

[Al-'Umayr] Do you not believe that the Western reaction to the Gulf events is not commensurate with the magnitude of these events?

[Al Khalifah] There may be some failure in connection with what happens in the Gulf, because they [the West] have their own concerns and preoccupations, but contacts are continuing and there is exchange of visits. I, for instance, will visit Britain early next month and will also visit the United States. At any rate, their position was good, especially the United States, which condemned terrorism and sabotage, reflecting the general international position as we have seen in more than one Security Council resolution.

[Al-'Umayr] What about economic development in your country? Many people believe that a part of the crisis is economic.

[Al Khalifah] Economic development is desired and the brothers in the GCC spare no effort in this connection because they believe that development in Bahrain means development for all, and Saudi Arabia is at the head of these states.

For our part, we will do everything we can to enhance the economy. Anyone who knows Bahrain and compares its past with its present will see a great difference.

We are focusing on attracting tourists and investment. We have received 2.5 million tourists, for instance. Some 3,000 tourists come from Europe every week. Big projects are on the way, with a boost for labor. We are heading for economic prosperity.

[Al-'Umayr] But what about political development, which is the slogan raised?

[Al Khalifah] As I said in the beginning, development is continuing in all directions and all sectors. That is what his highness the amir urges and it is also our national duty. We are all for development which serves stability and progress, and the Shura Council knows that. That was asked of them [the council members] in the amir's speech, which also asked them to study development of the Council, of representation, and of powers.

[Al-'Umayr] Will there be elections, for example?

[Al Khalifah] Several options are under study.

[Al-'Umayr] What about a reshuffle in Bahrain, that is, a review of government performance and change?

[Al Khalifah] There are continuous changes. There is no better evidence of that than the changes of ministers and aides and the other new quick changes. You know that Bahrain is at the forefront of other states as far as credibility, cooperation, and fast achievement are concerned. There has been no period in which Bahrain did not change.

True, we slowed down during the Iraq-Iran war and the Gulf war. No sooner had the crisis ended than Bahrain began to develop again.

[Al-'Umayr] As a military man, how do you view military expenditure in the Gulf? Some maintain that the averages are massive and serve no purpose.

[Al Khalifah] Militarism protects development and is in fact an integral part of development. I believe that military expenditure is low, not high, if compared with other fields of development.

The proof is that military presence is for the protection of the oilfields. We should strengthen our Armed Forces to enable them to play that protective role and shoulder that responsibility.

[Al-'Umayr] How does your highness view Arab reconciliation?

[Al Khalifah] We have called for Arab reconciliation and tolerance. The aim is to get together and return to Arab origins to protect ourselves against ambitions in a well-studied manner provided the meetings result in success. I cannot imagine that we would want a summit that would fail, we want meetings that would lead to success. The leading states will be the ones to decide. Bahrain will be present.

[Al-'Umayr] What about modification of the Arab League Charter?

[Al Khalifah] The Arab League is one of the oldest international institutions. A revival of the League would be useful. If the foundations are unsuitable then new foundations should be contemplated.

Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid [Arab League secretary general] understands the nation's situation. This is an opportunity to thank him for his attitude toward Bahrain and the Arab nation.

[Al-'Umayr] When will you exchange diplomatic representation with Israel, as others have done?

[Al Khalifah] The question of Israel depends primarily on the states holding negotiations. We wish all states a successful end to the negotiations because there is no alternative to peace.

[Al-'Umayr] Are there any Bahraini-Israeli contacts?

[Al Khalifah] There are no direct or indirect contacts with Israel except through the international committees which started at the Madrid conference.

This matter must be clarified. It is an Arab not a Gulf issue. We are a part of the nation. We should not anticipate events and why should we move ahead of others?

Kuwait

Kuwait: Prime Minister Condemns Bahrain Bomb Blast

LD1102231196 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic
2235 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Manama, 11 Feb — Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah, [Bahrain's] heir apparent and commander general of Bahrain's defense force,

received tonight a telephone call from His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister. The Gulf news agency, WAKH, has reported that His Highness Shaykh Sa'd had expressed during the telephone call the State of Kuwait's condemnation of all acts carried out by arsonists which target the security and stability of the State of Bahrain.

The agency has added that His Highness Shaykh Sa'd had reaffirmed the State of Kuwait's standing by all the measures taken by the State of Bahrain to secure its stability and provide peace for its citizens. He wished Bahrain continuous progress and prosperity.

Bahrain's Prime Minister Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Salman received a telephone call tonight from Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister. [passage omitted]

Kuwait: Iraqi Religious Opposition Group Leader Arrives

LD1002162896 *Kuwait KUNA in Arabic*
1430 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Kuwait City, 10 Feb — Mohammad Baqir Hakim, chairman of the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq [SAIRI], who began an official visit to Kuwait today, met Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir, Kuwaiti first deputy prime minister and foreign affairs minister.

This visit, the second in one year, comes at the invitation of Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad.

Sources at the SAIRI, which has its headquarters in Tehran, have told KUNA that Hakim will brief senior Kuwaiti officials about the latest developments on the Iraqi arena and the efforts to coordinate the positions of the various factions of the Iraqi opposition with a view to toppling Saddam Husayn's regime.

Hakim is accompanied by Ibrahim Hammudi, his political adviser, and Bayan Jabr, the director of SAIRI's office in Damascus.

Jabr told KUNA that during his visit Hakim will discuss UN Security Resolution 986 on the sale of quantities of Iraqi oil for the purchase of food and medicines for the Iraqi people, which is at the center of negotiations between Baghdad and the United Nations.

Jabr also called on the international community to send UN observers to Iraq to make sure that the food is distributed to the Iraqi people fairly and without discrimination.

Kuwait: Cabinet Passes Law on 5-Year Development Plan

LD1102175696 *Kuwait KUNA in Arabic*
1434 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait, 11 Feb — The Kuwaiti Council of Ministers today approved the draft law on issuing the five-year plan for economic and social development between 1995 and 2000.

Following a regular session held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent, 'Abd-al-'Aziz Dakhil al-Dakhil, minister for cabinet affairs, minister of planning, and acting minister of information, stated that the council had completed the discussion of this draft law and the attached general outline document, after carrying out a number of amendments during the second deliberation. The council decided to submit this draft law to Kuwaiti Amir Shaykh Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, after which it will be referred to the Kuwaiti National Assembly. [passage omitted]

Al-Dakhil said the council also discussed political issues in light of the reports at the Arab and international level pertaining to the main current events in the political arena.

Oman

Oman, Israel Prepare To Open Trade Offices

MM1202140596 *London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic* 11 Feb 96 pp1, 4

[Report by Sa'id 'Isa: "Muscat and Tel Aviv Preparing To Open Representation Offices"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Muscat — Muscat and Tel Aviv have begun preparations to open trade representation offices in the two countries in implementation of the agreement signed in this connection last month. Omani and Israeli officials are exchanging visits to choose the ideal locations for their offices and to make the necessary arrangements to furnish them. Informed sources have said that the two offices will be officially opened within the new few weeks. [passage omitted]

Qatar

Qatar: Omani Minister Visiting To Contain GCC Differences

NC0902204096 *Paris AFP in English*
2000 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Doha, Feb 9 (AFP)—Oman's Foreign Minister Yusuf Bin-'Alawi 'Abdallah arrived here late Friday [9 February] for a two-day visit, the

Qatari state agency QNA announced without giving further details. But a diplomat from the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) told AFP on condition of anonymity that the minister would try to "contain recent differences between member countries."

Bin-'Alawi said on leaving Muscat that his trip was part of a tour of GCC members for "talks before the next ministerial meeting set for March."

Qatar has been on bad terms with the other GCC nations — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Oman and Bahrain — since it boycotted the final session of a GCC summit in December to protest the nomination of a Saudi as the group's new secretary general over a Qatari candidate.

Qatar: Information Minister on Media Reform, GCC

*MM1202145396 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
11 Feb 96 p 4*

[Interview with Dr. Hamad 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Kuwari, Qatari information and culture minister, by Muhammad al-Makki Ahmad in Doha on 10 February]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Ahmad] During its meeting last Wednesday [7 February] the Qatari Council of Ministers discussed the question of the abolition of the Ministry of Information and adopted a provisional decision in this regard. When will the procedural measures for the abolition of this ministry be put into operation and what is the reason for this decision?

[Al-Kuwari] We are happy to say that our experiment in the field of information has been a successful one, with open information compatible with the nature of the contemporary age. Our experience during the past years has led us to realize that for information to have the desired effect it should be free as far as possible from government routine and the restrictions necessitated by the nature of the work in the various ministerial government departments.

This matter, that is the transformation of our information apparatuses into independent bodies and institutions, has been preoccupying us for some time. Following lengthy deliberations, we reached the conclusion that this was the right course to pursue.

I believe this experiment that we have embarked upon for the first time is a new one in the Arab world. We are happy to be the first country [in the Arab world] to embark on such a measure. However, many [foreign] countries have embarked on such experiment with great success. Through our provisional experiment with the independence of institutions and the granting of the

widest possible degree of freedom to the press, we trust that our experiment will be, God willing, successful.

The decision to transform the Information Ministry into independent institutions has come as a result of experience and the conviction of the information machinery and the present Information Ministry that government routine creates an obstacle to the performance of the information apparatuses. Experience has shown that the abolition of the Information Ministry will serve the free information process.

Thus we began by preparing a feasibility study on how to transform the various departments of the Information Ministry into independent bodies. God willing, we will complete this study within a month. The Information Ministry will then change into a group of independent bodies having their own legal status in the performance of their desired tasks.

[Ahmad] Are you satisfied with the performance of the press following the decision taken by Amir of Qatar Shaykh Khalifah Bin- Hamad Al Thani last October to lift the censorship on the Qatari press?

[Al-Kuwari] We are completely satisfied. I believe it was a unique and successful experiment. Freedom has certain aspects which we have to accept, just as is the case with any good and successful medicine, which might have some adverse side effects. Freedom, in the way it is being practiced now, constitutes a new experiment, and we have to tolerate some of the negative aspects that it entails so that in the end, we achieve the situation to which we aspire, namely a self-disciplined freedom.

I believe, however, that in the final analysis, this experiment serves national and pan-Arab interests. It also serves those in positions of responsibility because it negates the existence of any secrets, since everything that the intelligentsia have in their minds will appear in the pages of the newspapers in an objective manner. This freedom is a disciplined freedom and it is governed by the press and publications law which defines the necessary framework for the exercise of this freedom.

[Ahmad] When will a new information law be promulgated to keep abreast of the new information climate?

[Al-Kuwari] Very soon. The law was about to be published, but due to the recent decision to dissolve the Information Ministry some amendments were deemed necessary in this law so as to make it compatible with the new development.

[Ahmad] What are the nature and features of these amendments?

[Al-Kuwari] In the past, we used to have an Information Ministry which was the point of reference for settling questions in accordance with the laws. Now, we have to seek a new formula that is compatible with the new situation.

[Ahmad] Some of the other Gulf countries feel dismayed because of the way the Qatari media deal with Gulf matters. Is it true that you have deliberately sought to criticize some of the Gulf countries?

[Al-Kuwari] We do not seek to criticize anyone deliberately. We only seek the public interest and what unifies rather than divides the ranks. Qatar's primary object is to strengthen the position of the [Gulf] Cooperation Council [GCC] and bolster the bonds of fraternity among all its sons and among its leaders and peoples. This is the objective which Qatari information seeks. By permitting people to express their views on the GCC, we mean to let everyone feel the pulse of these people and consequently rectify the errors which the GCC might be committing and thus make the GCC stronger, more cohesive, and closer to the citizens.

[Ahmad] Following the visit by Omani Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah to Doha within the framework of his current tour, what results do you expect this tour to produce? Also, what is Qatar's position toward the GCC?

[Al-Kuwari] As it constantly affirms, Qatar is one of the founding members of the GCC, it has great faith in the GCC, and all the measures it takes are intended to bolster the GCC's position.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Minister Views Mubarak's Talks With Prince 'Abdallah

NC1102124296 *Cairo MENA in Arabic*
1215 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Mecca, 11 Feb (MENA)—Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif has emphasized that the meeting in Mecca last night between President Mubarak and Saudi Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz demonstrated the desire of the political leaderships in Egypt and Saudi Arabia to consult over topics of interest to the Arab and Islamic nation and on consolidating interaction among Arabs.

In remarks made today, al-Sharif noted that the meeting, which was attended by members of the Egyptian and Saudi delegations, dealt with the latest developments in the Middle East, coordination of efforts to close the Arab ranks, and mechanisms for bilateral ties between the two fraternal states. He added that both sides had agreed to call a meeting of the Egyptian-

Saudi Joint Committee following the 'Id al-Fitr holidays [approximately 19-22 February] on a date to be set by the two countries foreign ministers.

Yemen

Yemen: GPC Official Views Conflict With Eritrea

NC1002143996 *Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic*
0615 GMT 10 Feb 96

[Telephone interview with 'Abd-al-Malik Mansur, assistant secretary general of the Yemeni General People's Congress (GPC) in Sanaa, by 'Adil 'Abd-al-Tawwab in Cairo; date not given; from the "Dialogue From Afar" program—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Abd-al-Tawwab] We welcome Mr. 'Abd-al-Malik [Mansur] to our radio.

[Mansur] Thank you.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Mr. 'Abd-al-Malik, what is the current status of the conflict over the island of al-Hanish?

[Mansur] There is nothing new to discuss now except for the French initiative. The French Government's envoy came to our country a few days ago and met with his excellency the president, Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih. Talks focused on the French initiative, which states that arbitration between the two countries should begin by naming an international arbitration panel, the members of which will be chosen by the two sides. The head of the panel will be nominated by a third party. This panel will arbitrate between the two sides.

For this arbitration to be successful, things should be calm. There should be no media provocations and consequently no military provocations. In Yemen, we strongly believe that a peaceful solution is the only logical and acceptable solution. I believe that the other side also wants a peaceful solution, despite the fact that they are the ones who initiated the attack. I say this because they have accepted the French initiative, although occasionally we hear reports that Eritrea is still bringing in weapons, such as missiles, to the occupied Yemeni island of al-Hanish. There should be some flexibility and interaction. We will cross those bridges when we get to them.

['Abd-al-Tawwab] Have you also approved the French initiative for resolving this conflict?

[Mansur] The Republic of Yemen welcomes the French initiative. However, the Eritrean side must withdraw from the island.

[Abd-al-Tawwab] So, there are some developments or progress that has been made as a result of the mediation efforts.

[Mansur] The efforts exerted by fraternal Egypt, by Egyptian President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, and Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa prompted France to take action. France was the party from outside the region chosen to mediate between Eritrea and us. This Egyptian action resulted in the first steps of the French initiative when a French envoy visited the region, including Egypt. He also visited the parties involved in the conflict. He gathered information and returned to Paris, where he apparently received instructions from his leadership and came back to the region. Based on this, we can conclude that there is some progress.

[Abd-al-Tawwab] In light of this progress, can we expect a meeting between you and the Eritreans in the presence of a third party?

[Mansur] Such a meeting is unlikely as long as the island is under occupation. However, if the initiative does make progress and the occupier evacuates the island, then a meeting would be possible.

[Abd-al-Tawwab] Therefore, there should be withdrawal before a meeting will be possible?

[Mansur] This is the logical procedure.

[Abd-al-Tawwab] Mr. 'Abd-al-Malik, in addition to the request for withdrawal, are there currently any other obstacles to a settlement?

[Mansur] Actually, there is only one obstacle: The presence of our Eritrean brothers on an island that is not theirs. This has been a major impediment to relations in general, and to settling and demarcating maritime borders in particular.

[Abd-al-Tawwab] Currently, and in view of the progress, how does the political leadership view this crisis and its solution?

[Mansur] Both Yemeni citizens and the political leadership, have had a united stance from day one. We will always be united and firm in upholding Yemeni sovereignty and refusing to cede a single piece of Yemeni territory no matter what the justification.

[Abd-al-Tawwab] Ever since this conflict started, the Yemeni man in the street has had a clear and defined stance. Is this stance still the same?

[Mansur] Yemeni public opinion is the same as it has always been. In fact, it is intensifying, although Yemeni public opinion is very preoccupied with the serious economic crisis. However, the economic crisis has not made the Yemeni citizen forget his land and his

sovereignty. The issue of al-Hanish island remains the most important topic among the people.

[Abd-al-Tawwab] If the al-Hanish crisis, as you have described it, is the prime concern of the Yemeni citizen, does this mean that the political leadership has responded to these concerns?

[Mansur] The political leadership is not isolated from the man on the street. The political leadership is part of the people and has been elected by them. Therefore, the leadership sympathizes with the people and shows compassion toward them. It is undoubtedly planning to resolve the crisis.

[Abd-al-Tawwab] Is there any time limit for solving this crisis?

[Mansur] I do not think we can put a time limit on things that are not within the control of one party. These are matters that are controlled by various sides. Therefore, no time limit can be set for resolving this problem.

[Abd-al-Tawwab] At the end of this meeting, we thank Mr. 'Abd-al-Malik Mansur, the assistant secretary general of the General People's Congress in Yemen. He has been with us on the phone from Sanaa.

[Mansur] Thank you.

Yemen: Salih Reiterates Position on Economic Reforms, Islands

JN0902201596 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Television Network in English 1930 GMT 9 Feb 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih is continuing his nationwide tour. He has already visited Hadhramaut and Ta'izz. Earlier today, the president stopped in Ibb, where he was received by the governor, Mr. 'Abd-al-Qadir Hilal, and the masses.

The president is meeting this evening with prominent social and political figures, clergies, and the public in Ibb in a Ramadan night social gathering. The session is likely to address, or rather is addressing, national developments, topped by the government's recent economic reform measures.

President Salih has commended the difference in opinion among political parties here in Yemen, describing such phenomenon as a democratic practice in Yemen's multi-party political system.

The president was speaking to a Ramadan gathering in the city of Ta'izz last night attended by prominent clergies, political, and social figures in the region.

President Salih touched on the ongoing economic reform, urging for a unity of rank, and national allegiance for the sake of making the reforms a success, and realizing economic prosperity. The president has once again defended the drive to eradicate corruption and elements of sabotage, and put on in place a scheme of efficiency in the state machinery, and putting the right person in the right place.

President Salih expressed sympathy for the hardship resulting from the reform package, saying there was no other substitute, and the economic measures were a necessity under the current economic conditions and difficulties and past ill practices.

The president also spoke of the government's moves to boost agriculture production and prospects for job employment opportunities in the industrial sector.

On the Yemeni-Eritrean sea border conflict, the president took pride in the stand of the Yemeni opposition supporting the Yemeni stand vis-a-vis the occupation of Yemen's Greater al-Hanish island. He told the gathering this stand clearly reflects the Yemenis' nationalism and pride.

The president has again reminded everyone of the pain and the sad feelings inflicted on all Yemenis as a result of the Eritrean aggression on Yemen's Greater al-Hanish island. He has reasserted the government's wise diplomacy and political dialogue as means for finding a peaceful settlement to the Yemeni-Eritrean conflict.

Yemen: Salih on Economic, Administrative Reform

JN1002205096 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Television
Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 10 Feb 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text Excerpt] Brother Lieutenant General President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih arrived in Ibb Governorate on 9 February on an inspection visit of the governorate to familiarize himself with the situation there and the people's concerns and aspirations. [passage omitted]

Salih attended a Ramadan evening in Ibb Governorate on 9 February. It was attended by ulemas, men from the judiciary, leaders of political parties and organizations, social figures, representatives of executive bodies, shaykhs, notables, and a number of citizens from all over the governorate.

The brother president spoke at the event. He said: I was pleased by what I heard about the assessment of the situation in Ibb Governorate and in the entire homeland. I was also pleased with the discussions, which reflected a political awareness whether on the part of the coalition parties' representatives and the opposition parties' representative. This is a positive phenomenon — one that indicates a sense of responsibility and deep affiliation to the 22 May homeland, praise be to God. We thank God that our struggling people achieved victory over all of the challenges imposed on them. This is manifested in their victory in the Yemeni revolution and unity. God willing, the Yemeni people will achieve victory thanks to the consolidated efforts of their sons in the economic battle. This battle is a concern of all Yemenis, including intellectuals, politicians, and the general public, because it is an important issue and is linked to the people's lives and standard of living.

The brother president talked about the economic reform program. He reviewed all aspects linked to the program. He affirmed that the implementation of the economic, financial, administrative reform programs is an important and real issue. If we do not expedite economic reform measures, matters will become more difficult and the situation will deteriorate further.

Speaking about administrative reform, the brother president said: We are determined to continue the administrative reform policy and uproot corruption. Everyone is urged to cooperate. The brother president noted that democracy requires the constant awareness of the people so they practice it responsibly and benefit from it. Democracy does not mean chaos and harm. It is a choice for building and has to do with positive performance to achieve what is better.

The brother president spoke about the Eritrean aggression against Yemeni island of al-Hanish al-Kabir. He said that al-Hanish al-Kabir is a Yemeni island. He stressed that the world will not recognize the aggression or award the aggressor in any way.

The brother president commended the opposition's stand on the events on al-Hanish al-Kabir, saying: This is a responsible national stand.

The brother president urged wealthy people to seek social integration so that they feel a sense of mercy and sympathy, which is a national duty. [passage omitted]

**Iraq: Albright's Allusion to Humane Situation
Ridiculed***JN0902171296 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
14 Jan 96 p 2*

["Standpoint" column by 'Isa Isma'il al-'Abbadi: "Miserable, Cheap Lies"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Can anyone believe Madeleine Albright when she says that the United States is concerned about the humanitarian situation in Iraq? Can anyone also believe that the Americans, who bombed Iraq from one end to the other, dropped thousands of tonnes of bombs and missiles on it for 42 days, imposed a general embargo on its people for more than five years, and caused death to hundreds of thousands of children, women, and old people, are more concerned about the Iraqi people than leader Saddam Husayn himself, as Albright claims?

The record of U.S. crime against the Iraqi people is so black and oppressive that even Albright, with her weak mind and shoulders, cannot bear it [as received]. Thus, in face of such a criminal record and the weak U.S. position versus the branding facts possessed by Iraq and the international community, Albright has no choice but to reiterate ridiculous lies about Iraq's potential threat to the security of the region and failure to implement UN resolutions — yes, just like that! — and benefit from the resolutions which permit it to export its oil and feed its people.

These miserable, cheap lies, which are composed by a junior official in the State Department, and later reiterated by Albright and also Clinton in his regular messages to Congress, reflect great U.S. disappointment over the fumbling of U.S. policy, Washington's ignorance of the facts, and the U.S. Administration's determination to safeguard its illegitimate interests in its dealing with the Arab homeland, especially Iraq and the Arabian Gulf.

No one in the world, other than the U.S. Administration, has said that Iraq poses a threat. Even Ambassador Ekeus did not say that in his recent report and news conference. On the contrary, he denied more than once that Iraq poses the threat which Albright claims to exist.

As the Iraqi foreign minister said, it is the United States which poses a threat to the security and stability of this region through its heavy military presence in the Gulf and the Red Sea and its imposition of the no-fly zones in northern and southern Iraq.

It will be observed that Albright has not made any reference to the violation of Iraq's national sovereignty when speaking about the resolutions on limited oil exports. She has not said anything about the humble

bread crumb which would result from these resolutions, which are written in a such a clever way so that the Iraqis would reject them. These resolutions are not written in a way so that the Iraqis would accept them and benefit from their national resources.

Iraq has called more than once for amending the paragraphs which are prejudicial to its national sovereignty. However, the United States rejected that and insisted on its aggressive policy toward Iraq and tried through its domination of international forums to prevent the international community from responding positively to Iraq's cooperation with the UN Security Council and the Special Commission.

And now that Iraq has fulfilled its basic obligations under Resolution 687 and leader President Saddam Husayn has announced on the 75th anniversary of the foundation of our brave army that Iraq will continue to cooperate with the Security Council, Albright tries to shuffle the cards, especially after she has heard very clearly and seen with her own eyes France's request for the dispatch of a neutral commission to Iraq to examine the negative effects of the embargo on people's lives.

France's reference to the neutral commission expresses the international community's belief that U.S. domination of the commissions which have been sent to Iraq has produced inaccurate reports about Iraq's cooperation with the Special Commission.

Albright will not be able to influence anyone by her deceptive terms. Iraq has gone a long way toward removing the unfair blockade and the Security Council must now fulfill its obligations under Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687.

**Iraq: Writer Doubts Albright's 'Concern' About
Iraqis***JN0902185196 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic
4 Feb 96 p 2*

["Standpoint" column by 'Isa Ima'il al-'Abbadi "The Iraqi Response on the Great March Day"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Once Again, Madeleine Albright reiterates her statements and misleading allegations that the United States is "probably more concerned" than leader Saddam Husayn about the welfare of the Iraqi people.

The great Iraqi people have responded to Albright's lies on the Great March Day [referendum day] by saying a big yes to Saddam Husayn as president and leader to build Iraq, face the challenges, and pursue the jihad drive until final victory is attained. Similarly, the Iraqis said a big and loud no to the U.S. idol and to all the evil enemies of Iraq.

When newsmen and politicians saw how the Iraqis rushed on the Great March Day to say yes to Saddam, they recalled Albright's lies and allegations about the relation between the leader and his people. On the Great March Day, the news men asked the Iraqis who was imposing the embargo on them. The only answer they heard was: The United States of America.

Albright has, on more than one occasion, tried to mix the cards, mistakenly thinking that the Iraqi people and the world have no memory. She also imagined that the world has forgotten that the United States mobilized armies and showered Iraq from north to south with thousands of tonnes of bombs and missiles and that it was the United States which caused the death of hundreds of thousands of Iraqi children, men, women, and elderly, who died either because of the shelling or because of the unjust embargo imposed by the United States for over five years.

Looking back at the Security Council session held to discuss the embargo issue, we find that it was Albright who always opposed lifting the embargo on Iraq, using U.S. influence and hegemony to prevent any alleviation of the unjust embargo. This is despite the fact that most of the permanent Security Council members believe that the Council should ease off the embargo in light of Iraq's cooperation with the United Nations and its fulfillment of its essential obligations toward Security Council Resolution 687.

In spite of all this and more, Albright talks about her concern about the Iraqi people, in an attempt to belittle the memory of the Iraqis as well as that of the Arabs and the rest of the world. It is as if the Iraqis have such a short-span memory that they have totally forgotten the hideous crimes committed against them by the United States.

Let it be known to Albright that the Iraqis have a sharp memory and they know that the Iraq of Saddam Husayn has been the target of aggression and an unjust embargo because of its nationalist and independent approach and because of the scientific and technological progress it achieved during the reign of Saddam Husayn.

There are ample resources in Iraq. However, these resources were pillaged by the greedy colonialists; and Leader Saddam Husayn put an end to all colonialist plundering and confiscation. For the first time since the Abbaside era when Baghdad was prosperous, the Iraqis are once again in charge of their own affairs and are enjoying their abundant resources under Leader Saddam Husayn.

Iraq: Oil-for-Food Talks With UN To Resume

JN1202081896 Baghdad INA in Arabic
0750 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] United Nations, 12 Feb (INA) — Iraq and the UN General Secretariat will resume their dialogue today. Both sides are optimistic and hope a satisfactory agreement will be reached on oil for food, medicine, and other humanitarian needs for the Iraqi people.

The two delegations have held four official sessions since 6 February. The talks centered on the distribution of food, medicine, and other basic humanitarian needs, as well as issues related to oil exports and banking affairs.

Two days after the dialogue started, Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation, expressed hope that progress will be achieved.

The two delegations are expected to hold a plenary session this afternoon. Last Thursday, the delegations agreed to form small subcommittees, which met last Friday.

Sources close to the dialogue told the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY the sessions held by the two delegations so far were characterized by technical and businesslike discussions.

Iraq: UK, French Support for 'Dialogue' With UN Cited

JN0902193296 Baghdad Iraq Television Network
in Arabic 1800 GMT 9 Feb 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Britain has welcomed the current dialogue between Iraq and the United Nations, which began at the UN headquarters in New York on Tuesday, on exchanging oil for food, medicine, and basic needs for the Iraqi people.

In an exclusive statement to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY [INA] correspondent in London today, an official spokesman for the British Foreign Office said that his country encourages and supports the Iraq-UN talks. He added: We are pleased with these talks, which can produce positive results.

The British House of Commons held an official session yesterday to discuss the damage caused by the continued blockade imposed on Iraq. (Tem Delel), a Labor Party deputy and the secretary general of the British Trans-Borders Friends organization, discussed the repercussions of the blockade imposed on the Iraqi people since

August 1990. This blockade has resulted in the death of thousands of innocent Iraqis, he said.

Allen Stewart, a deputy from the ruling Conservative Party, supported Delel's remarks and demanded lifting the unjust blockade imposed on the Iraqi people.

In another development, France expressed hope that the Iraq-UN dialogue on exchanging oil for food, medicine, and basic needs for the Iraqi people will yield positive and tangible results.

In an exclusive statement to the INA correspondent in Paris, Mr. (Dotiryo), an official spokesman for the French Foreign Ministry, said that France wants this dialogue to succeed to secure the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people. He added that this dialogue is a positive step and is in conformity with the known French positions which stress the need to alleviate the Iraqi people's suffering.

Iraq: 'Optimism' Over Success of UN Oil Talks Cited

*JN1002123396 Baghdad INA in Arabic
1040 GMT 10 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The United Nations, 10 Feb (INA) — Experts and specialists from the Iraqi and UN delegations exhaustively discussed technical issues related to the oil-for-food formula. Meanwhile, UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali evaluated the outcome of the dialogue sessions held last week.

The UN secretary general presided over a meeting of a UN working team last night. Hans Corell, UN under secretary general for legal affairs and head of the UN delegation to the talks with Iraq, attended the meeting.

The UN working team consists of Corell, UN under secretary general for legal affairs; Special Political Adviser Chinmaya Gharekhan; Marrack Goulding, UN under secretary general for political affairs; and other UN officials.

The Iraqi and UN delegations are scheduled to meet Monday afternoon for an official plenary session. It is worth noting that experts from both delegations held technical sessions Thursday afternoon and all day Friday.

The IRAQI NEWS AGENCY learned that conferees at the UN working team's meeting noted their satisfaction with the seriousness of dialogue sessions, as well as the optimism expressed by both sides.

Experts from both sides discussed oil marketing, trade, food supplies, the ration card system, health affairs, medicine, the medicine card, and banking measures re-

lated to the sale of oil to purchase the basic humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people.

Experts from the Ministries of Oil, Trade, and Health, and the Central Bank attended on the Iraqi side.

Both sides, as well as diplomats who are following the UN talks, are optimistic about the outcome. Journalists covering the dialogue sessions had the impression that both sides, Iraq and the UN General Secretariat, are about to reach an agreement on implementing the oil-for-food formula.

Immediately upon arriving for the first session of talks on 6 February, Dr. 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari, head of the Iraqi delegation, said that the Iraqi delegation had come to the United Nations to uphold Iraq's commitment to cooperate with the UN General Secretariat.

Al-Anbari pointed out that the technical talks will last a week to 10 days. The current dialogue sessions will be concluded sometime between 12 and 16 February.

The optimism over the outcome of the dialogue sessions was not kept hidden after the UN talks. This optimism was enhanced by an official press statement issued on 7 February on the outcome of a cabinet session presided over by His Excellency President Saddam Husayn. In this statement, the cabinet "hoped that the dialogue will produce positive results."

News agencies, particularly ones that specialize in oil, economic, and financial affairs, quoted and highlighted this paragraph from the cabinet statement. They viewed this paragraph as proof that Iraq is determined to render the current dialogue with the United Nations a success.

Iraq: 986 Trucks Ready To Transport Food to Iraqis

*JN1102092196 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio
Network in Arabic 0400 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The mixed-sector Iraqi Land Transport Company and the Iraqi-Jordanian Company have prepared their 986-truck fleet to participate in transporting food and humanitarian needs from the Iraqi ports on the Arabian Gulf and from the Jordanian port of al-'Aqabah to our militant people.

In a statement to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY, the manager of the mixed-sector Iraqi Land Transport company said that the company's 600-truck fleet has been prepared to transport food from the Iraqi ports of Umm Qasr and Khawr al-Zubayr and from the Jordanian port of al-'Aqabah. Meanwhile, the company's mobile and static plants and workshops have been prepared to maintain the fleet of trucks in a way that will secure

smooth transportation of food to the Trade Ministry's warehouses.

The manager of the Iraqi-Jordanian Company said that the fleet of the company's branch in Iraq, which includes approximately 100 trucks, is ready to transport food from Iraqi and Jordanian ports as a contribution to alleviating the suffering of our people.

Iraq: 'Revolutionaries' Attack Party Post; Youths Arrested

NC1002163696 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our struggling people's revolutionaries recently attacked a ruling party headquarters in the al-Mu'allimin district, al-Nasiriyah Governorate, with light-caliber weapons.

Our mujahidin sources said the attack left an 'Aflaqite regime mercenary who was guarding the post dead and a senior party official seriously wounded. The wounded official was hospitalized. The sources added that the regime's security forces rushed to close the roads leading to that district, in order to arrest the attackers who managed to return safely to their bases.

Elsewhere, tyrant Saddam's security forces have launched an arrest campaign among youths who frequent the al-Tali'ah youth center in Baghdad, after the discovery of leaflets denouncing the ruling regime. Informed sources said security officials questioned the detainees to find out who was behind the distribution of leaflets at that center, which is regarded as one of the 'Aflaqite party's major cultural centers in Baghdad. The security officials failed to obtain information leading to those who carried out this jihad act.

Iraq: Party Military Bureau Officers Said Arrested

NC1002164296 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Informed sources say that the 'Aflaqite Party's Military Bureau recently underwent a campaign of arrests and investigations of senior officers and non-commissioned officers.

The sources said that Colonel 'Umar Yasin al-Tikriti and Colonel Husam Rashid al-Dulaymi were among those arrested. Colonel al-Dulaymi was one of the officers who were questioned following last May's uprising in al-Ramadi.

Iraq: Kurdish Party Criticizes Erbakan's Statements

NC0902183296 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1530 GMT 9 Feb 96

["Text" of statement issued by the official spokesman of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan's Central Information Bureau; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] The chauvinistic views of the Turkish Welfare Party [RP] led by Necmettin Erbakan are being revealed daily. This party, which won 22 percent of the Turkish Parliament's seats in the elections on 24 December got a good percentage of votes in the Kurdish areas and in Turkey's western areas, where there are Kurds too, areas including Istanbul and the capital Ankara. The Kurds were thus expressing their opposition to the policies of the Turkish Government and its traditional parties and establishments.

A statement attributed to the RP was published a few days ago viewing dictator Saddam Husayn as a very close friend of the RP. The Kurdish revolution and federation and the presence of the Kurdish people were also regarded as rebellion and strife leading to partition, according to the statement. The RP also called for supporting the Baghdad regime to let it return to the international community fold. Such a call only feeds the spirit of Turkish chauvinism laid down by Ataturk, something the RP claims to oppose. This party claims to be fighting to liberate Turkey from Ataturk's legacy based on returning to the essence of Islam.

Erbakan, more than other Turkish politicians, knows how his close friend Saddam Husayn followed repressive and chauvinistic policies against the Kurdish people and how thousands of Muslim Kurds became the victims of the al-Anfal operation and genocide in which chemical weapons and other internationally banned weapons of mass destruction were used against the Muslim Kurdish people.

Erbakan has called for the return of Saddam Husayn's regime to Kurdistan, for defending Turkish borders, and for the Iraqi regime's return to the international community fold. This is an attempt to satisfy those with commercial interests and the oil companies that seize every opportunity to devour Iraq's wealth on the pretext of alleviating the Iraqi people's suffering.

We call on the Kurdish people of Turkey and the national and democratic forces to declare their opposition to the statements and views of the RP, which falsely claims to be defending the Islamic nations. We also call on the Kurdish and Islamic parties, particularly the Islamic League and the Islamic Movement parties in Iraqi Kurdistan, to condemn the RP's recent statements, which are detrimental to the Iraqi Kurdish people's hopes and ambitions, and to call on this party to stop supporting dictator Saddam Husayn, the enemy of Islam and Muslims.

Israel: Peres Announces Early Elections

TA1102201496 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1
Network in Hebrew 1805 GMT 11 Feb 96

[News conference by Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Peres] Good evening. As you know, I have recently gone through a period of profound soul-searching with regard to bringing forward the elections. This soul-searching is over. I will go straight to the bottom line: I have decided to bring the elections forward to the earliest date permitted by law.

Approximately 100 days ago, I assumed the mantle of prime minister following the assassination of the late Yitzhaq Rabin. I will not deny sharing the shock felt by the entire nation. I cannot forget our last moments at the rally in Tel Aviv. We felt exhilarated. We sang the "Song of Peace" together. The organizers of the rally asked both of us to descend through the steps leading to the square; however, the steps were blocked by crowds of supporters. Therefore, we had to go down the steps separately. When I reached street level, I discovered that my car was parked in front of Yitzhaq's. I asked Damti, Yitzhaq's driver, where Yitzhaq was, and he pointed to the steps. I saw Yitzhaq coming down. I was completely at ease. I got into my car. Several seconds after my car door closed, I heard three shots. In my heart, I refused to believe that anything had happened to Yitzhaq. When I got to the hospital, I found Le'a (Rabin), his family, and dozens of friends. To my amazement, I learned that Yitzhaq had been hit; however, I still did not know the extent of his wounds. The hospital director and the doctor who treated him approached me only afterward and told me that Yitzhaq was dead. As a human being, a friend, and a partner, I refused to accept this. Together with Le'a, I went to bid him farewell. His face had such a serene expression, the kind of which I had never seen before.

After being appointed acting prime minister, I discovered that just like me, the entire country was in a state of shock. It was clear to me that my first duty was to prevent this shock from becoming a general paralysis. There were those who proposed to hold elections immediately, thus transforming the sudden shock into a sweeping mandate for continuing our path. I rejected this proposal out of hand. I witnessed with emotion the awakening of our youth and the public's remorse over their indifference prior to the assassination. I was flooded with exceptional reactions from around the entire world. Yet I also felt the signs of a rift among our people: On one hand, a sense of fury at the horrendous murder, accompanied by the casting of blame on certain

publics that were not responsible for the murder. In addition, there were threats by those who did not conceal their jubilation.

It was clear to me that together with the determination to achieve peace with our neighbors, I also had to make efforts to make peace among ourselves. The national agenda was packed: The economy showed signs that it was about to boil over; there were urgent problems in the field of immigrant absorption which demanded an immediate solution; a commission of inquiry had to be established following the assassination; and problems that arose concerning the Shin Bet had to be resolved. A properly functioning government was needed in order to deal with a series of burning issues which could not be put off. The elections in the Palestinian autonomy gave rise to difficult and serious problems. The resumption of the negotiations with Syria, which Yitzhaq and myself had agreed to turn into negotiations for a comprehensive peace in the region, was an issue that had to be taken care of immediately. I constantly received advance warnings about terrorist attacks. Yitzhaq himself told me that such a warning had been received just prior to the rally itself. I instructed the defense establishment to take uncompromising steps against the bad seeds that had sprouted among us and were prepared to break the law and even pull the trigger. I knew that the dedicated security personnel who now surrounded me more than ever before were there to protect me from the murderous insanity of individuals but not to paralyze the struggle of the legitimate opposition. I now feel that the situation has stabilized. The government has done a good job implementing the moves formulated by Yitzhaq. The people who mourned his passing have demonstrated a keen desire to pursue the path of peace, growth, and security.

Aliya is continuing and its contribution to the economy and society has grown daily. Unemployment has dropped drastically. The educational system made good use of the supplementary budget and has started to become known as one of the best in the world. The overpasses, the junctions, and the roads have reopened the country. The agreement with the Palestinians has been properly implemented. The autonomy elections were a success. Terrorism has declined. The doomsayers were proved wrong. Those who had previously found much fault with the Oslo accord began to live with it and admit its advantages. Even those who did so secretly or hesitantly knew deep in their hearts that it is the only genuine and practical political plan and that it has the ability to bring about peace and security. The mockery of the Jordanian option has turned into generous praise, proving that peace with Jordan is possible, correct, and

even successful because it embraces exceptional possibilities.

The Syrian track has been opened, and it has been shown that there is a chance for progress toward a comprehensive Middle East peace and an end to violence in Lebanon. We also learned, however, that several issues — two in particular: security arrangements and assuring the supply of water — require a great deal of time. Therefore, we decided that the negotiations with Syria must not be conducted under the pressure of elections. Christopher's successful visit to Damascus determined that the negotiations can continue to be conducted independent of the elections. Therefore, we reiterate that the agreement with Syria will be brought to a national referendum.

Ladies and gentlemen, Israel's status in the world has reached a new peak, and Israel's economy is considered an incredible achievement in the Western world. Israel, therefore, is reaping the fruits of its peace policy. In July, this government will be four years old. During this period, it has been proven that we have a direction and that we have receipts for the success of this direction. I am certain that in order to continue this path and in order to lead additional and diverse achievements, the mandate of the government and my personal mandate must be renewed.

I feel that I am at the peak of my duties and my capabilities to serve the people in the direction taken by Yitzhaq, a direction for which we fought together and which I now must continue with my utmost experience [10-second break in transmission] until I learned that the elections will not harm the national interest, which is to advance peace and continue growth. That is what happened. I also learned that holding early elections would reduce the period of uncertainty, an especially long period, in which the temptation to apply pressure and blackmail increases, which would harm our national ability to focus our energies on national requirements.

Elections are essential to a democratic regime, but a long campaign that goes on for about a year is a waste of time and resources at the people's expense. I feel unprecedented sympathy and support. I feel that generations of young people expect to leave their mark on the future of the state. I see before me the possibility of an immediate departure on a path that will lead Israel by the end of this century — that is, in four years — to end the state of war in the entire region and bring about economic prosperity, which will raise the standard of living of Israel's inhabitants to a level equal to that of France and England. I see a real possibility of correcting social imbalances and bringing about a level

of education that permits the younger generation to cope adequately with the challenges of the new era.

I believe that it is possible to meet Israel's security and deterrence requirements vis-a-vis the new dangers. My generation reached the position in which it must make urgent decisions. With me in the government will be members of new generations who will be able to continue the great and historic path of our people. I am convinced that all this will not occur without the moral renaissance of the Jewish people throughout the world which will comprise a traditional flavor and a logic of revival. I know that to many these are words of optimism, but my experience and my age give me the right to express creative optimism to create a new reality — one that is greater than the vision that fueled it, as has been shown in the past.

I propose that we hold a short, inexpensive, and fair campaign. We must not repeat the terrible accusations of treason, murder, and such words. We must explain to the people the differences of opinion — to the extent that they exist — in a civilized manner. We will act with restraint; it is my hope that the opposition will do likewise. We will prove to the entire world that Israel can recover from the terrible assassination and that it is a strong country and a true democracy. Thank you. I will now answer questions.

[Channel 2 Television's Gadi Sukenik] Mr. Peres, you have given a series of reasons for bringing the elections forward, and I suppose they are all genuine. However, you will be attacked by those who will say that you are trying to profit from the wave of public sympathy for Labor and for you personally following Yitzhaq Rabin's assassination, as indicated by the polls.

[Peres] I think you are 100-percent correct. I do not think the opposition has any other issue to bring up. It was not I who created that reality. It was my duty to build bridges, which I did. To all those who accused me of not requesting a mandate, I now say that I call for a mandate. You cannot claim, on one hand, that the government does not have a mandate and then, when it asks for one, come up with weak excuses.

[Channel 1 Television's Qeren Neubach] Mr. Peres, is your announcement on early elections not really an admission of the failure of the talks with Syria or, if they did not fail, are you not really halting them to make political gain?

[Peres] I admit that the negotiations with Syria will last longer than I thought. That is definitely an admission, and even after I checked that the talks will not cease and that the peace process will not be slowed down and

will not cease, I reached the conclusion that this is the right thing to do.

[Qol Yisra'el's Shlomo Raz] Mr. Peres, I would like to continue in that vein and ask you whether the fact that a group photograph with President al-Asad was not possible made you decide to hold early elections?

[Peres] The story about a group picture is a photo-opportunistic [last word in English] story. What we need is to show that President al-Asad is now prepared to appear publicly at the head of the team with regard to the issues about which the negotiating teams cannot make decisions. I am sure it will happen; I would like it to happen faster. I do not present this as a condition. Sometimes in negotiations, you need to face patience with patience.

[Raz] In other words, President al-Asad has not expressed a readiness to hold a public meeting?

[Peres] He did not mention a date for a public meeting would be the correct definition.

[Unidentified IDF Radio correspondent] Do you not fear that in the wake of your decision to bring the elections forward, you will be accused of being a waffler or being up to your political dirty tricks?

[Peres] All those who made those accusations showed that they were wrong. Nobody more than me said yes when it was necessary and no when that was necessary. I also do not propose turning Hebrew into only one word. Sometimes one has to say yes, which I did with more daring than all my accusers and attackers. I have never been involved in any dishonorable tricks. I did my best to maintain the unity of the people, and I do not regret it. I have been accused of many things. Aspersions have been thrown at my mother and my alleged business dealings. If I were to take all the lies to heart, I could not participate in the campaign.

Israel: Netanyahu on Peres Call for Early Elections
TA1102203896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1820 GMT 11 Feb 96

[News conference by Israel's Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu at Bet Agron in Jerusalem — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Correspondent Dov Gilhar] Mr. Netanyahu, I am from Channel 2 Television. Could we ask you a question?

[Netanyahu] I would like to issue a brief statement.

[Gilhar] You have just listened to Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' statement. Do you agree in principle to holding early elections?

[Netanyahu] I heard Mr. Peres and realized that the election campaign has already begun. I believe that in these elections, the Israeli public will face issues vital to the country's future. I think all Israeli citizens will have to seriously ask themselves who they would prefer to handle the peace negotiations between us and the Arabs, who they would like to see in charge of security, and who is indeed capable of guaranteeing such security. There will also be additional questions, and we will present the voters with a clear alternative to the government's policy.

Contrary to the government's policy, we, of course, will preserve the unity of Jerusalem and ensure our full sovereignty there. Contrary to the government's policy, we will remain on the Golan Heights, cultivating instead of destroying the Jewish settlements there. And contrary to the government's policy, we will not permit the establishment of a Palestinian state along the 1967 borders, which is where the government's policy is leading. We will offer the Palestinians self-administration, accompanied by security zones and Jewish settlement blocs. We believe that this is the only way to stabilize a situation which many Israelis now fear has careened out of control. Up to now, this government has acted much too fast, impetuously, and hastily, and in some respects, it has received too little in return. We will handle things in a responsible and serious manner while safeguarding our vital interests and security.

Other issues will also feature in these elections. These issues relate to economic liberalism as opposed to the kind of bureaucratic strangulation which is choking the economy. I am a great believer in Israel's brilliant future. I have no doubt that we can guarantee this brilliant future by reducing the government's involvement in many aspects of our daily lives; by letting the State of Israel develop with a view to new markets; by letting entrepreneurship flourish here; by freeing land; and by granting freedom to the average citizen by letting people decide what they really want to do in the business, economic, and service sectors. We also believe in the need for an educational revolution in Israel in order to prepare Israel's children for tomorrow's world. We believe that, first and foremost, they must be qualified for the technological world.

I must admit that I am not a great believer in the new Middle East. There is a new Middle East, but we do not see every Arab farmer in the region with a computer; however, we do expect every Jewish and Arab child in Israel, as well as every Israeli citizen, to have a computer and acquire the necessary technological skills required to prepare them for the future world of communications. If we do not accomplish this by changing the educational order of priorities, we will

gradually be dragged backward. This, of course, is one issue that is crucial. I believe that we have no future, however, without some roots, some anchors to our past. I think that our yesterday, our past, is unique and has helped us survive until this day.

I view with great concern the erosion in the values of the return to Zion, the return to the Land of Israel, our right to the Land of Israel. We must change the educational system, cultivate in each child the values of the eternalness of the Jewish people. In other words, an educational revolution is an integral part of our plan. The people of Israel will have to decide whether they want a strong and secure Israel. I do not mean only an Israel that is sure of itself, its border, and its army. I do not think that our real strength derives only from the number of our tanks and aircraft. I do not believe that the real strength of the people of Israel over the generations, and definitely the State of Israel in our generation, results only from its military might. It is due to a deep belief in our history and our future, and I think we must cultivate that vision. We have seen in our distant and not so distant past how enormous empires collapsed when the vision and the faith was lost. We want a vision for tomorrow and faith in our roots and the basic values of the Jewish people. The voter will be faced with all these questions about the political future of the State of Israel, about the way to achieve peace with security, and about the liberal economic policy which we want.

We believe that the voter should have been asked to decide a long time ago. I believe that the time has come to present that choice to the Israeli public. Therefore, the Likud and Tzomet have decided to support the law for early elections. I think that the date is less important. I do not think the issue of a week here or there is important. It does not matter much to me. I will call on Knesset Member Moshe Qatzav, my colleague and the Likud faction chairman, to meet tomorrow with opposition faction heads to decide together on the date. I am sure that we will be able to reach an agreement with the prime minister on the matter. It should not pose an obstacle. What is much more important to me is that we conduct this campaign fairly, with mutual respect, and with the seriousness that the fateful questions about the future of the state, peace, and security deserve. When those questions are put on the agenda and the citizens of Israel have to decide between us and our opposition, the government, I have no doubt that they will make the right choice. I am sure that they will give me and my colleagues the task of forming the government and returning Israel to the right path.

[Unidentified correspondent] Mr. Netanyahu, these elections are the first direct elections to be held in Israel. Will the Likud stress the personalities of the candidates?

[Netanyahu] Those questions will come up, but the major question is: Where do we want to go? Do you want to take the path of endless concessions, haste, and giving in on our most basic interests, on security? These questions are not theoretical. Jerusalem is now being divided. It is already on the agenda in secret talks in Europe. We must ensure — at least, I will ensure — that we will provide a clear-cut answer prior to the elections and, I believe, after the elections as well. Therefore, the public will have a very simple choice: Does it want the path taken by the leftist government — that of endless concessions — or the other path — that of the national camp — which will promise to uphold security, Jerusalem, and our interests while achieving a lasting peace? We do not want peace now; we want peace for generations, peace for our children, peace for the coming generations, a real peace.

[Correspondent] Mr. Netanyahu, you initiated the alliance between the Likud and Tzomet based on polls which are not too complimentary to you. Will you make one more attempt to get David Levi to join the joint Likud-Tzomet list?

[Netanyahu] First, I did not make the arrangement based on polls. It is based on my belief that this is the right way to advance. I am convinced that it will also find expression on election day, because the split was wrong and the alliance is to our benefit, of course, and also to the benefit of the country. We said — and I repeat — that we would like to be joined by others — including David Levi — who, like us, are concerned about the future of the country and want to make sure that Israel does not act like a defeated country but rather safeguards its interests and ensures the future of the peace we all want.

[Correspondent] So, what are you offering David Levi?

[Netanyahu] I will not make any offers over the airwaves.

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1900 GMT on 11 February adds: "David Levi, the third candidate for prime minister, supports elections at the earliest possible date. Mr. Levi said that returning to the Likud is not at all on his agenda."]

Israel: SHAS Objects to Spring Elections

TA0902133196 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew
1300 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Knesset Member [MK] Arye Der'i said that SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] will

object to bringing the elections forward to May or June as Labor wants, and will support the Likud's stance to hold them at a later date.

Interviewed by our correspondent Hayim Hecht, Der'i said that Labor and Likud officials approached him on the issue and the coalition intends to submit the question of early elections to the Knesset House and Constitution and Law Committees as early as 13 February so that they may start working on the pertinent legislation. Der'i said he told senior Labor officials that he believes this is an autocratic and dangerous move that the people will perceive as a Labor ruse if it fails to attain broad agreement on the issue. In his opinion, it is not certain that the government has a majority of 61 MK's to bring the elections forward to the dates it wants.

Israel: More Reactions to Announcement of Early Elections

TA1202111796 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew
12 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Menahem Rahat]

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Shim'on Peres telephoned Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu just before midnight yesterday at his home and invited him to meet at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem at 1900 [1700 GMT] this evening in order to agree on a date for holding elections for the 14th Knesset. At the meeting, Netanyahu will inform Peres which date is acceptable to all the opposition factions.

Leaders of the opposition parties will meet this morning at the offices of the Likud Knesset faction to coordinate their positions on a suitable date for the elections. The meeting was initiated by Likud faction chairman Moshe Qatzav. All the opposition parties, with the exception of SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] and United Torah Jewry, have already reconciled themselves to early elections.

Likud-Tzomet: Yesterday, the Likud and Tzomet announced their acceptance of early elections, stating: "A week or two here or there is of no importance." The Likud expressed the hope that the election campaign would be fair and protested the fact that both television channels devoted 12 minutes of their coverage to Peres' speech while Netanyahu was given only five. "I heard Mr. Peres and realized that the election campaign has already begun," Netanyahu said yesterday.

The National Religious Party [NRP]: The NRP welcomed Peres' announcement on early elections and even proposed bringing them forward by another month, to the end of April. Knesset Member [MK] Hanan Porat expressed the hope that no radical steps would be taken

with regard to the Golan Heights, Judaea and Samaria, and especially not Hebron.

SHAS: SHAS leader Arye Der'i said that calling early elections was a mistake. "Peres had a mandate until October," Der'i said. Yesterday, Der'i said he could not rule out the possible establishment of a post-election unity government led by the candidate who won the direct elections for the premiership. "I would not rule out the formation of a unity government with the Likud even if Peres wins," Der'i asserted. As for SHAS' path after the elections, he said: "If Peres wins, we will go with him; if Netanyahu emerges victorious, we will go with the Likud. There is not much difference between them anyway."

David Levi: MK David Levi said yesterday that he was in favor of holding the elections on the earliest possible date. Levi noted that his party may turn out to be the surprise of the elections. "Ultimately, making it impossible to form a coalition without us," Levi explained. His party has still not chosen a name but it has been learned that one of the options is Hatiqva [The Hope].

Moledet: The Moledet faction has still not held internal elections but the decision to hold early elections will force it to rush its schedule. Rabbi Yosef Ba-Gad, who defected from Moledet, is also preparing for elections. He is currently collecting the 50,000 signatures required to present his candidacy for prime minister.

[Tel Aviv DAVAR RISHON in Hebrew on 12 February in a page 3 report by 'Ezra Hen and Moti Bassok adds that "MK's Avigdor Qahalani and 'Imanu'el Zismann met with coalition chairman Ra'anana Kohen yesterday at the Third Way's offices in Tel Aviv and declared their support for early elections."

[The report notes that MK's Darawshah and al-Sani', representatives of the Arab Democratic Party, said that they would support early elections "with the aim of bringing victory to the peace camp."

["HADASH [Democratic Front for Peace and Equality] MK Tamar Gozansky said that her faction felt that the elections should not be brought forward. In her opinion, the months remaining until October should be used to promote the peace process with the Palestinians and Syria. Nevertheless, she asserted that HADASH 'would not play into the hands of the Likud, and since it appeared that there was a majority in the Knesset in support of early elections, we will accept the dates proposed by the Labor Party.'"]

Israel: Peres, Netanyahu Election Tactics Compared
TA1202113596 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT
in Hebrew 12 Feb 96 pp 1, 23

[Commentary by Nahum Barnea: "His Early Experience, His Late Age"]

[FBIS Translated Text] For the first time in his life, Shimon Peres is running in the elections as a prime minister, and he intends to use this advantage fully.

As observed yesterday, Peres intends to be very royal, distant, and cold. He is standing on a separate podium, with no rival he appreciates and without partners other than Yitzhak Rabin, who in his death has become a closer ally than in life.

Peres' associates conducted polls for him, and came up with the following lessons:

— The voters who waver between Netanyahu and Peres will decide not according to the political plan each of the candidates presents, but will judge their character. Peres' problem has always been one of credibility. Now, it is portrayed as his advantage. The image he promotes now is of a mature, seasoned, and relaxed Peres. His advanced age is presented as an asset. My experience matters, not my age, he stated last night.

— Yitzhak Rabin is an electoral asset that should not be avoided. Rabin's murder is an even greater asset — an emotional asset. Labor and Peres will not hesitate to use it as long as they stay within the boundaries of good taste, or until the polls tell them to stop. Peres will be the father of the nation, and Rabin the uncle. Some 20 percent of Peres' speech last night was devoted to Rabin's murder. Yoram Rubin, who was Rabin's bodyguard the night of the murder, was Peres' bodyguard last night. He had to hear the entire story from the top biting his lip. And this is only the beginning: Le'a Rabin may be called upon to address Labor rallies. According to Peres' men, she has agreed to do that.

— The voters did not like the abundance of justifications given for the advancement of the elections. They mostly resented the real argument, that Peres stands a better chance of winning now rather than later. They bought one argument: that Peres is asking the people for a mandate. The seasoned Peres focused on the parallel arguments last night: The fear that a prolonged election campaign might cause "extortion" and waste the people's money. And why the mandate? To allow him to continue the negotiations until it is time to hold a referendum. But he already has that mandate.

— The Likud will try to make the elections focus on the question of who will gain more in the negotiations

with the Arabs — adamant Netanyahu or Peres the compromiser. Labor will ask the public: Whom do you trust more to give you a better future? Likud will talk to the nation. Labor will address the individual.

Peres the prime minister has always been better than Peres the contender. He tends to listen to people, making them feel that he agrees with them. This is how Peres Yes-and-No was born. He means to please, even the polls. This, of course, is a mistake: In the polls, the nation plays with impossible dreams, such as peace with Syria without ceding the Golan. It expects the leader to show determination. Peres will not be tested by his public relation clips, but by the good news that comes out of the Prime Minister's Office.

Netanyahu has always been good at campaigning. He has the talent for driving a message home, even if he must repeat each sentence twice. He is a goal-oriented organizer. Labor tends to doze off during elections; Likud wakes up. Labor's line is usually stuttering, Likud delivers a clear message. Bibi will not be an easy opponent.

Still, the election campaign that started found Netanyahu busy putting out fires of his own making. Bitterness over the agreement with Tzomet is growing. When Netanyahu convenes the Likud Central Committee to approve the agreement, half the members might vote with their feet, not show up, and deny him a majority vote. At the same time, in his recent remarks against the Oslo agreements, Refa'el Eytan is pushing Tzomet to the far right.

Peres, on the other hand, stands in splendid isolation. He has no one to beat in his party and no one to lose to. Only his own mistakes (or external terrorism) might steal the show from him. Last night he sounded almost as distant as his late friend Francois Mitterrand, whom the French used to call "God."

Israel: Peres Orders Low Profile on Charter After 'Arafat Request

TA1102125996 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1100 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] At today's weekly cabinet session, Prime Minister Shimon Peres demanded that the ministers refrain from making any statements with regard to the amendment of the Palestinian Charter. Right-wing officials are asserting that the government is already preparing Israeli public opinion for the nonabolishment of the charter. Our correspondent Ya'el Sternhal reports on the cabinet session from Jerusalem:

[Begin recording] [Sternhal] Prime Minister Shimon Peres explained today that the statements made by cabi-

net ministers are not promoting Israel's interests because they have made the Palestinian leaders feel like collaborators who are serving Israel's needs. Peres asked the ministers to lower their profile or, in other words, refrain from making public statements regarding the Palestinian Charter. Incidentally, on numerous occasions during his latest trip to Europe, Peres himself reiterated the need to revoke the charter. The prevailing assessment is that his remarks to the ministers today were prompted by messages Peres received from Yasir 'Arafat on the matter.

The opposition was not slow in reacting to the prime minister's remarks. Likud Knesset Member 'Uzi Landau said the government has already dropped its demand for the amendment of the Palestinian Charter.

[Landau] Yet again, we are witnessing one of the maneuvers so typical of Mr. Peres. He starts off by flexing his muscles, but lo and behold, nothing is going to happen and the Palestinians are planning to convene the Palestine National Council only in May 1996. Now, Peres is telling his ministers to lower their profile. He is already beginning to prepare the public for Israel's next capitulation, when the government drops its demand to amend the charter.

[Sternhal] The ministers were also briefed today by outgoing Shin Bet head Karmi Gilon on the terrorist attacks that have taken place over recent weeks, as well as those thwarted by the security forces. This was Gilon's last appearance before the cabinet as the Shin Bet head.

Another issue discussed today was the defense establishment's demand to build another four bypass roads in Judea and Samaria. After objections were voiced by Finance Minister Avraham Shohat, it was decided to form a special team which will examine the issue and present its conclusions to Shim'on Peres. [end recording]

Israel: Nabulus Closed 'Until Further Notice' Due to Hamas Rally

TA0902191096 *Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew*
1900 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Nabulus will be closed to Israelis from 0600 [0400 GMT] tomorrow morning until further notice. Worshipers will not be allowed to enter Joseph's Tomb and Israeli vehicles will be rerouted to bypass roads.

Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the ban was imposed due to a mass rally planned by Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] in memory of terrorist Yahya 'Ayyash, alias The Engineer.

Israel: Closure Imposed on Ramallah Due to 'Security Reasons'

TA1202054696 *Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew*
0500 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] A closure was imposed on Ramallah this morning due to security reasons. Local residents will be prohibited from leaving the town and the entry of Israelis will be banned. The joint Israeli-Palestinian patrols will not operate in Ramallah and traffic will be diverted to other roads.

Israeli citizens were also prohibited from entering the Qalqilyah area and traffic is being diverted to bypass roads. The decision was reached after a joint patrol was attacked with stones and empty bottles yesterday. There were no casualties but the vehicle was lightly damaged.

Meanwhile, the dispute with the Palestinians over the Rafah airport and the construction work of defensive ramparts near Rachel's Tomb continues. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that the supreme Israeli-Palestinian civilian committee will this week discuss the building of the airport in Rafah. Israel has lodged a protest with the Palestinians, claiming that among other things, they are violating the agreement reached on this matter by bringing dozens of policemen to the airport area and threatening IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers at gunpoint. [passage omitted]

Israel: 'High Alert' at Mourning, Ramadan End

TA1102061796 *Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English*
0500 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the defense establishment are on high alert over the possibility of attacks to mark the conclusion of the 40-day mourning period for Yahya 'Ayyash and the end of the holy month of Ramadan. The assessment is that terrorists are planning a suicide attack on a crowded bus in the center of Israel.

The prime minister's adviser on terrorism, Brigadier General Yig'al Pressler, is calling on Israelis to be on the lookout for suspicious individuals or objects.

Israel: Minister Shahal Sends Sympathy Message After IRA Bombing

TA1002161696 *Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English*
1500 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A message of sympathy following the IRA terrorist bomb attack in London has been sent to the British Government by Israel's Minister of Internal Security Moshe Shahal. Shahal said the democratic world must unite to condemn such acts of terror.

Israel: Proceedings of Shamgar Commission of Inquiry Detailed

TA1102173196 Jerusalem GOVERNMENT PRESS
OFFICE in English 1700 GMT 11 Feb 96

[Statement issued by Eti Eshed, Justice Ministry spokeswoman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Following is the summary of the proceedings of the Shamgar Commission of Inquiry regarding the murder of the late Prime Minister and Defense Minister Yitzhaq Rabin:

Sunday, 04.02.96

Lawyers representing GSS [General Security Services] personnel who have received letters of warning from the commission continued to question Yarqon District Police Commander Ya'aqov Shoval. The questioning focussed on the planning of security at the rally, especially security in the north parking lot and events that occurred during the rally. The police investigation of 07.11.95 was also brought up. Chief Superintendent Shoval was also questioned by his lawyer.

Monday, 05.02.96

The head of the Non-Arab Affairs Division of the GSS, H., reviewed the unique problems encountered by his branch in relation to other bodies in the intelligence community in general, and in the GSS in particular. H. also addressed the dissemination of information and assessments to bodies outside the GSS, and pointed out activity in this area. Afterwards, he responded to questions from lawyers representing the head of the GSS, the head of the Operations Branch of the VIP Protection Unit, and Chief Superintendent Ya'aqov Shoval.

Tuesday, 06.02.96

Commander of the Yarqon District Special Patrol Unit Chief Inspector Bruno Stein, who was the area commander during the rally, testified first. He testified about the group of orders which preceded the rally, the security planning, and the cooperation between the VIP Protection Unit and the Special Patrol Unit. He responded to questions by lawyers representing B., the commander of the VIP Protection Unit, A., the head of the VIP Protection Unit Operations Branch, and Y., the GSS commander at the rally.

Afterwards, GSS Head Karmi Gilon testified and reviewed the various functions of the GSS, including its activities and the threats which it faces. He emphasized the preferred treatment given to the VIP Protection Unit, and commented on the Commission's request on the question of supervision over GSS activities.

Wednesday, 07.02.96

The Commission did not hold any deliberations. Those who gather information for the Commission took testimony from Yarqon Sub-District Operations Division Officer Chief Superintendent 'Ezra Aharon, the Tel Aviv District Border Police Unit commander, and several police officers from the Ayalon Special Patrol Unit who participated in the event. The testimony of Chief Superintendent Aharon dealt with the planning for the event. The Border Police officer's testimony dealt with planning for the event and the performance of Border Police forces. The testimony of the Ayalon Special Patrol Unit dealt with their activities in the northern parking lot area. Testimony was also taken from a young woman who — in her words — saw the man who yelled, "Blanks, blanks," but did not identify him.

Thursday, 08.02.96

Tel Aviv District Police Commander Maj.-Gen. Gabi Last was summoned at the request of the lawyer representing B., the commander of the VIP Protection Unit. Maj.-Gen. Last was questioned about the non-submission to the Commission of Inquiry of material from the investigation held on 07.11.95 until 01.02.96. Maj.-Gen. Last replied that this was an error, and was not done intentionally. He believed that the investigation was operational and not an investigation of the event required by the Commission. He was further questioned on the content of the investigation and exchanges of words that he had during the investigation with officers subordinate to him. He was also questioned by the lawyers representing A., the head of the VIP Protection Unit Operations Branch, Y., the GSS operation commander, and Commander Shoval.

At the conclusion of the above testimony, Commander Shoval asked to comment on the issue of the investigation, and was questioned afterwards.

Afterwards, the head of the GSS continued his testimony and addressed the dissemination of intelligence between the GSS and the police, coordination and cooperation between the two bodies on the issue of security for VIP's, and activity regarding the concern over Jewish attacks in and outside the GSS. He also testified concerning his supervision over the Protection Division and the VIP Protection Unit. Mr. Gilon was also questioned by lawyers representing those who have received letters of warning from the Commission on the issue of the VIP Protection Unit's standards and protection methods both before and after the murder, on the documents related to inquiries held by the internal investigating committee near the end of its investigation and which only recently reached the Commission, and

on the training and instruction of the forces assisting the GSS.

Israel: Defense Official on Status of Nautilus, Arrow Programs

TA1202091696 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST
in English 12 Feb 96 p 2

[Report by Steve Rodan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The next stage of the Nautilus program is to develop a prototype laser system that can track short-range rockets and destroy them, Defense Ministry Director General David 'Ivri said yesterday.

He said Friday's [9 February] successful destruction of a Katyusha rocket by laser represented the end of the first phase of the Nautilus program, which was designed to determine the feasibility of the weapon. The next stage is to build a prototype of a full system that would include a radar sensitive enough to detect short-range missiles and mortar shells.

"The major problem is accuracy and detection," 'Ivri told reporters at a briefing. "You need a very strong radar and to coordinate the radar with the laser. This is a major challenge."

'Ivri said that the laser would undergo another test before the program enters the next stage. He said it is too early to provide an estimate on how much the development of a laser system would cost.

Defense officials have generally played down the success of Nautilus. They said the program is mostly directed by the US — starting from the Strategic Defense Initiative in the mid-1980s with Israeli involvement beginning only a year ago.

'Ivri said the Nautilus's success would have no effect on another Israel-US program on missile defense, the Arrow.

Unlike Nautilus, 'Ivri said, Arrow, which is being funded at \$500 million over the next five years, is meant to intercept and destroy ballistic missiles at range way beyond that of the laser program.

He said another test of Arrow 2, the operational model of the missile, will take place soon. He said the demonstration would not try to intercept an enemy missile.

[Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew on 12 February in a report by 'Ami Etinger on page 22 adds that "a senior Defense Ministry official disclosed that Israel was holding talks with the United Kingdom, France, and other countries on strategic cooperation. The talks dealt

with political issues, intelligence assessments, regional issues, and cooperation between defense industries.

["At the multilateral peace talks on security affairs, seven countries have agreed to cooperate with Israel in maritime rescue operations. The participants also discussed the need for advance warning of military exercises, as well as the establishment of a regional security center in order to reduce the possibility of war breaking out due to a misunderstanding."]

Israel: Commentary—U.S. Envoy's Containment Policy 'Failed'

TA1102105596 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew
11 Feb 96 p B1

[Commentary by Tzvi Bar'el: "Toppling Saddam Once Again"]

[FBIS Translated Text] One month ago the U.S. Congress approved a special budget clause granting \$20 million to strengthen the Iranian opposition aiming to topple the Iranian regime. A week ago U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry divulged that the United States is cooperating with Jordan and other countries in the region in a bid to overthrow the Iraqi regime.

That which seems logical in Washington, however, is evaporating in the Middle East winds. None of the opposition movements being financed by the United States has so far managed to do much more than financially support its activists. Saddam's regime is persevering and maintains official trade relations with France, Russia, Oman, and Qatar. Iraqi oil is being funneled to Jordan while Jordanian and Turkish medicines are finding their way to Baghdad. Iran is signing new agreements almost every week. Germany, Japan, and Russia continue to supply Iran's civilian and military demands. This year Russia will sell Iran transport planes that will replace the worn U.S. planes, and the Bushehr nuclear reactor is in the stages of construction.

A business deal being negotiated in New York these days is another example of the surrealistic political situation characterizing the region. While William Perry is talking about toppling Saddam's regime, Saddam's special envoy 'Abd-al-Amir al-Anbari has started negotiating with the UN representative over the implementation of UN Resolution 986. This resolution, dubbed "oil for medicine," is not new. It was passed last summer as a one-time permission — with an option for extension — for selling Iraqi oil to the tune of \$2 billion over a period of half a year. This sum was earmarked for purchasing foodstuffs and medicines for the Iraqi public. This resolution will certainly not improve the prospects of toppling Saddam.

How do these negotiations coincide with the policy aimed at overthrowing the Iraqi regime? The answer is that the U.S. Administration has become entangled in a series of political contradictions in the region which can hardly be resolved. The anti-Iraqi coalition is disintegrating. France and Russia have become Iraq's main advocates. The Arab countries are speaking louder than ever about the need to mend the domestic rifts in the Arab world — another way of saying that Iraq should be readmitted into the Arab fold. Here too, however, different voices can be heard. The Gulf states, except for Kuwait, want to start easing the sanctions on Iraq. Egypt has become alarmed by the daring shown by Jordan in explicitly calling for the overthrow of the regime. This issue has almost caused a rift in Egyptian-Jordanian relations, and the Egyptian foreign minister hurried to seek explanations from King Husayn.

Meanwhile these countries have realized that the Iranian threat is much worse than the Iraqi. The riots and detentions among Shiite demonstrators in the streets of Bahrain have been going on for 10 days now; the Saudi authorities have still failed to uncover those responsible for planting the bomb there; an Islamic opposition is active in every Gulf state and also in Egypt, which is holding Iran directly responsible of supporting this opposition. In fact, these countries realize that only a strategic power such as Iraq can constitute an Arab counter-threat to Iran.

The United States is finding it hard to deal with such an attitude. The dual containment policy against Iran and Iraq, conceived by Martin Indyk, current U.S. ambassador to Israel, has failed. The U.S. presence in the Gulf states is being kept low-profile because of the fear of a reaction by the Islamic opposition. Meanwhile U.S. companies see lucrative deals in Iran and Iraq being snatched by other companies, and the U.S. partnership with Jordan and Israel is annoying Egypt and Kuwait. It appears that even if the United States manages to overthrow Saddam Husayn, it will anger all the Arab countries. It is one thing to save an Arab country from an aggressor and something else completely to overthrow an Arab regime.

In view of the fact that there is no Arab consensus regarding Iraq, the United States is finding it difficult to work out a Middle East strategy. Israel has found itself thrown into this confusing situation. On the one hand it wants to be part of the Middle East, but on the other it is incapable of — and should not — dissociate itself from U.S. interests in the region, including those that do not coincide with those of the Arab countries.

In fact, the very concept of the Middle East is losing its meaning, because when the comprehensive peace

process between Israel and the Arab states is finalized Israel will have to decide on which side of the fence it sits. The new Middle East will not be simply a Middle East but rather what it has been all along: A score of separate countries that have now lost their common denominator — namely, a common enemy. It is therefore preferable not to say at this stage who will be our future enemy and ally, seeing that Iran and Iraq will continue to play a significant role in the region.

Israel: Pollard Names Peres as 'Operator'

TAI202100196 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT
in Hebrew 12 Feb 96 p 11

[Report by Ilana Baum]

[FBIS Translated Text] Jonathan Pollard, jailed in the United States, claims that Prime Minister Shim'on Peres had run him as an Israeli agent in the U.S. Navy to collect vital information for Israel.

For the first time since he was jailed 10 years ago, Pollard has publicly charged the Israeli Government, explicitly naming Peres. The question of who were Pollard's operators — and whether not only his direct operator Rafi Eytan, but also Yitzhaq Rabin, Shim'on Peres, or Yitzhaq Shamir knew about his activities — has never been answered.

In a letter to Peres last week, delivered by his wife, Pollard writes: "Mr. Peres, allow me to remind you that it was you personally and your government who sent me to serve as your agent to collect vital information that had been withheld from Israel. If anyone is familiar with the real nature of my activities, it is you. If there is anyone who knows that everything I did was for the State of Israel and not against anyone, it is you. If any serious offense was committed here, it was committed by you when you appointed me an Israeli agent."

Pollard's message came as a reaction to Peres' statement that Israel will ask that Pollard be released for humanitarian reasons because it cannot ignore the damage his activities caused to the United States. According to Pollard's wife and attorneys, the prime minister's statement seriously harmed Pollard's main argument. Ever since he was arrested, he maintained that the information he relayed to Israel was meant to help it, but not to harm the United States in any way.

According to his attorneys, Gidi Frishtick and Mikha'el and Alon Galarant, Pollard has so far avoided naming Israeli cabinet ministers who knew about and approved his activities.

Jordan: King Husayn Meets With U.S. Senate Delegation

JN0802213496 Amman Radio Jordan Network
in Arabic 1900 GMT 8 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Their Majesties King Husayn and Queen Nur al-Husayn received three U.S. senators and their wives. They are Senator Claiborne Pell, Senator Charles Robb, and Senator James Inhofe. His Highness Prince Talal Bin-Muhammad, his majesty's military secretary, attended the meeting. They discussed a number of regional and international issues of common interest.

His Majesty King Husayn said that we in Jordan have completed the peace making stage and have begun the stage of building this peace. He stressed Jordan's hope that what it has achieved within the peace process will be a model to be emulated in the region. His Majesty expressed his concern over the plight of the fraternal Iraqi people and stressed the need to enable them to enjoy their rights to security, freedom, and a decent life.

Regarding Jordan's relations with brothers in the Gulf states, His Majesty King Husayn said that these relations are very good and that they will be crowned in the next few days with his majesty's visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

For their part, the U.S. senators expressed their appreciation and that of their colleagues at the U.S. Senate for His Majesty King Husayn's efforts toward achieving a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East and toward enabling the region's people to achieve prosperity — which achieves a secure and decent life for them. They also appreciated the king's efforts aimed at enabling the people of the region to bear the fruits of peace and to establish cooperation among them for the sake of a better future for the coming generations. The senators said they look forward to his majesty's visit to the U.S. Senate.

Jordan: King Leaves for Saudi Arabia, To Visit Egypt 'Soon'

JN1102114896 Amman Radio Jordan Network
in Arabic 1100 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] With God's care and protection, His Majesty King Husayn left the homeland for Saudi Arabia at noon today on a brief visit during which he will perform the minor pilgrimage. During the visit, his majesty will meet with His Highness Saudi Crown Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz and senior Saudi officials.

In statements to journalists prior to his departure, His Majesty King Husayn said he hoped that current efforts

would lead to bolstering Arab solidarity and achieving Arab integration in the service of Arab interests. His majesty said: Our relations with Saudi Arabia are normal, God be praised. The visit will further enhance bilateral relations to achieve the two countries' common interests. His majesty added that the objective of the meetings with his brothers and the resumption of the dialogue is to bolster cooperation in the Arab arena. He added that he will soon pay a visit to sisterly Egypt.

His majesty was seen off by His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, ministers, the Amman mayor and governor, the Public Security, Civil Defense, and General Intelligence directors general, and civilian and military officials.

In the presence of the cabinet members, His Highness Crown Prince Hasan took the constitutional oath before his Majesty King Husayn as regent during his majesty the king's absence abroad.

Accompanying his majesty were Their Highnesses Princes 'Abdallah, Faysal, and Hamzah, Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabarirti, Senate President Ahmad al-Lawzi, House of Representatives Speaker Engineer Sa'd Hayil Surur, Royal Hashemite Court Chief 'Awni al-Khasawinah, and a number of princes, members of the royal family, his majesty the king's advisers, and a number of deputies and senators, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a number of senior civilian and military officials, and a number of press chief editors.

Jordan: King Comments on Saudi Visit, Perry Remarks

JN1202103296 Amman Radio Jordan Network
in Arabic 0600 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Majesty King Husayn returned to the homeland at dawn today at the end of a visit to fraternal Saudi Arabia during which he performed the minor pilgrimage and met with His Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, crown prince, deputy prime minister and commander of the Saudi National Guard. Discussions dealt with fraternal bilateral relations in a frank and objective manner and with a desire to bolster and develop these relations in various fields to realize the interests of the two fraternal peoples.

Talks also tackled the need to activate Arab solidarity, enhance joint Arab action, unify efforts, and clear up Arab differences so that the nation will be able to confront the challenges and realities of this historic stage. The two sides also discussed a number of regional and international issues of mutual interest.

His majesty visited holy al-Madinah where he performed midnight prayers at Prophet Muhammad's

mosque. He also visited the tombs of Prophet Muhammad's companions and family members at the al-Baqi' cemetery and read the first sura of the holy Koran for their pure souls.

His majesty was received upon return by His Highness Crown Prince Hasan, His Highness Prince Zayd Bin-Shakir, commander of the Royal Air Force, and a number of officials.

His majesty spoke to journalists on his return:

[Begin recording] [Husayn] Praise be to God for giving us the opportunity to perform the minor pilgrimage and visit Prophet Muhammad's Mosque. From the spiritual point of view, this was one of the most wonderful visits. It provided us with the chance to hold the long-awaited meeting with the dear brothers. I believe that what had affected the bilateral relations has gone for good, and that relations are now stronger than ever, based on our joint eagerness to safeguard them at the current stage and in the future and to avoid and prevent any party from harming these relations as happened in the past. At the same time we are eager to play our role and duty toward our nation, God willing, and toward the two fraternal countries. All our talks were beneficial, frank, and honest, and we are determined to remain in constant contact and to discuss everything openly in order to prevent the recurrence of what happened in the past. Praise be to God, it was a stage that is over, and there is a new promising start, with God's help.

[Unidentified correspondent] Would you comment on the recent statements by the U.S. secretary of defense on Iraq?

[Husayn] The U.S. defense secretary made a statement, and then they later said that they amended some of these statements one way or another. Our position on Iraq is clear. We are with the Iraqi people. We have been, we continue to be, and will remain supportive of Iraq's territorial integrity, safety of land, and national unity on its full national soil, and we are with rescuing it from its present situation. This is the position.

[Correspondent] Thank you sir. [end recording]

Their Highnesses Princes 'Abdallah, Faysal, Hamzah, sons of King Husayn, the prime minister, Senate president, speaker of the House of Representatives, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court, a number of princes and members of the royal family, advisers of his majesty, and a number of Senate and House of Representatives members, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, a number of ranking civil and military officials, and a number of chief editors of newspapers returned with his majesty the king.

Upon his return to the homeland, His Majesty King Husayn sent the following cable to His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, Saudi crown prince, deputy prime minister, and commander of the Saudi National Guard:

In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Your Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, crown prince, deputy prime minister, and commander of the Saudi National Guard, may God watch over you.

God's peace, blessings, and mercy be upon you.

While leaving your fraternal country, I am pleased to extend to a dear brother my best greetings and wishes of good health and success. God honored us by a visit to His House and enabled us to perform the minor pilgrimage and visit the tomb of Prophet Muhammad, God's peace and blessing be upon him.

I express to my dear brother my extreme thanks and appreciation, along with my family members and accompanying delegation, for the warm hospitality we have all received. I reaffirm my deep pride in the fraternal bonds and firm historical ties between our two families and fraternal people, the foundations of which were laid by His Majesty King 'Abd-al-'Aziz and his brother His Majesty King 'Abdallah Bin-al-Husayn, may God have mercy on them.

Our meeting on this blessed night of this holy month was a brotherly and fruitful meeting, praise be to God, in which a spirit of brotherhood and openness prevailed, as well as eagerness to bolster our relations and common noble objectives. These objectives embody the interests of our two fraternal peoples and desire to serve the causes of our Arab nation.

I repeat my deep thanks and gratitude to my dear brother for the warm hospitality and eagerness to make our meeting successful through frank brotherly understanding. Please convey my best regards and wishes to my brother King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the custodian of the two holy mosques. I beseech God to grant him good health and to grant you and the members of the Saudi royal family good health, success, and happiness. I beseech God to guide us all along the right path for the good of our two peoples and Arab and Islamic nations.

God's peace, mercy, and blessings be upon you.

[Signed] Your brother, Husayn

Jordan: al-Mu'ashshir on New Government, Iraq, Regional Ties

JN1102085296 Amman Radio Jordan Network
in Arabic 2100 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Council of Ministers met this evening under the chairmanship of Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti. Several decisions were made during the session. Following the meeting, Information Minister Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir spoke to reporters.

[Begin recording] [al-Mu'ashshir] The Council of Ministers today formed four ministerial committees. They are: The Legal Committee headed by the minister of justice, the Development Committee headed by the minister of higher education, the Public Affairs Committee headed by the minister of interior, and the Control and Inspection Committee headed by the public works minister. The last committee is a new one. It will be in charge of following up projects in the various ministries and independent state departments and making sure that these projects are progressing well and are not obstructed for any reason whatsoever. As I said, this is a new committee which is not only tasked with following up projects; it will also undertake control and inspection in line with the government's policy of fighting corruption and ensuring sound performance. The Council of Ministers also approved the appointment of 'Umar al-Rifa'i as Jordan's ambassador to Israel. This approval will be endorsed by a royal decree once the Israeli Government approves this appointment. These are the most important decisions made by the Council of Ministers today. The door is now open for questions.

[Salim 'Ali Dhiyab, Amman Television correspondent] Dr. Marwan al-Mu'ashshir, on the eve of his majesty the king's important visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia tomorrow. What is the importance of this visit in developing the Jordanian-Saudi relations on the one hand and inter-Arab relations on the other?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] We attach great importance to this visit. The Jordanian efforts in the field of improving relations with Saudi Arabia have been going on for a long time. This visit crowns these efforts. We are very pleased with the recovery of His Majesty King Fahd. His Majesty King Husayn will meet with his brother King Fahd in Mecca. There will also be a visit to Jeddah and Jordanian-Saudi talks, naturally on the highest level. We attach great importance to this visit and to the restoration of normal Arab ties at a stage when continuous coordination with all states in the region has become a must. The new headline is now integration and cooperation. Therefore, it is essential to complete the circle and to ensure a continuous coordination on the highest levels. This is an extremely important visit

and we hope it will be followed by other steps in the field of improving relations with the rest of the Gulf states, particularly Kuwait.

[Unidentified correspondent] Is Prime Minister al-Kabariti planning to visit Kuwait after 'Id al-Fitr?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] We do not want to anticipate developments. No visit is now scheduled, but contacts with the State of Kuwait are under way and have never ceased. We hope other steps will shortly follow the recent Kuwaiti step represented in the message his highness the Kuwaiti heir apparent and prime minister sent to His Highness Crown Prince Hasan and the congratulatory cable Shaykh Sabah al-Salim, Kuwaiti Deputy Prime Minister, sent to Prime Minister al-Kabariti.

[Indistinct question by an unidentified correspondent; Amman Television in Arabic at 2100 GMT on 10 February carries the following recording of the question] U.S. Secretary of Defense William Perry recently said there is coordination between Jordan and the United States to topple the Iraqi regime. In other statements today, Perry emphasized this and said the United States will deploy its forces in the Middle East. What is your comment?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] Our contacts with our big sister Egypt are also continuing. We hope that his majesty the king's visit to Saudi Arabia will be followed by another visit to Egypt, hopefully by the end of this week. As for the question on Iraq, I said two days ago that Jordan supports every effort aimed at alleviating and ending the suffering of the Iraqi people. In all our efforts we have always insisted on the unity of Iraq—land and people. Jordan does not have any plans to topple any regime. Jordan was not and will not be a party to plans to topple any regime. What is of interest to us is the unity of Iraq—land and people—and ending the suffering of the Iraqi people.

[Reporter] Regarding the Jordanian-Arab relations, is there anything new about the Jordanian-Syrian relations?

[Al-Mu'ashshir] Actually, we hope so. As you know, there is a large breakthrough on the Syrian track and we hope that progress will be made on this track in the near future. We also hope that this breakthrough will help boost the Jordanian-Syrian relations and restore the past normalcy. We are ready to take any step in this regard that would lead to further coordination and cooperation with the brothers in Syria. [end recording]

Jordan: al-Mu'ashshir on Iraq Policy, Perry's Remarks

JN1002135796 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
10 Feb 96 pp 1, 7

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman — Jordan supports all efforts aimed at alleviating the suffering of the Iraqi people under the five-year-old international sanctions against their country and is in contact with all parties, particularly Arab countries, to help such endeavours, Information Minister Marwan al-Mu'ashshir said Friday.

Dr. al-Mu'ashshir was replying to a question on comments made by U.S. Secretary of Defence William Perry Tuesday that the U.S. was cooperating with Jordan and other Middle Eastern countries, which he did not name, to accelerate the demise of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn from power.

The information minister said: "Jordan is supportive of any effort that will help alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people in a framework that would respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Iraq and help ensure the rights and freedoms of the people of Iraq."

"In this regard, Jordan is in contact with all countries, particularly the Arab countries," the minister added.

Mr. Perry, in a speech before the Washington Institute for Foreign Policy on Tuesday, said: "I think there are things which we and Jordan and other nations in the region can do accelerate the demise of the present regime in Iraq. We are already cooperating in some actions."

The defence secretary did not give details of the purported actions.

When press for a direct comment on Mr. Perry's assertions, Dr. al-Mu'ashshir would only say that "Jordan's policy vis-a-vis Iraq has not changed" and that the Kingdom fully respected the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of its eastern neighbour.

In comments carried by international news agencies on Thursday, Dr. al-Mu'ashshir said Jordan appreciated the support that the U.S. extends to the Kingdom and that Washington would soon make good its promise to give fighter jets to the Kingdom.

Dr. al-Mu'ashshir also denied reports that the government had placed a ban against Iraqi Foreign Minister Muhammad al-Sahhaf entering Jordan in retaliation for his verbal attacks against Jordanian policy and saying that the Kingdom would be better off seeking a federation of among its own people rather than recommending it for Iraq. "It is simply not true," Dr. al-Mu'ashshir told the JORDAN TIMES when asked about the report of the purported ban against Mr. al-Sahhaf.

In other comments carried by the local media on Friday, Dr. al-Mu'ashshir described His Majesty King Husayn's upcoming visit to Saudi Arabia on Sunday as a turning point in Jordanian diplomacy. "His visit will be the crowning of efforts by Jordan to improve its relations with Gulf countries," he said. The King will also visit Egypt on Wednesday in response to an invitation from President Husni Mubarak.

Jordan's Ambassador to Egypt Nayif al-Qadi described the King's visit to Cairo as part of consultation and coordination between the King and President Mubarak on Arab, regional and international issues in addition to the latest developments of the Middle East peace process.

In a statement to the Jordan New Agency, PETRA, Mr. al-Qadi said the visit was aimed at "broadening channels of communication, coordination and cooperation between both countries, developing agreements and fixing a date for the meeting of the Joint Higher Jordanian Egyptian Committee in Amman, following the change of governments in both countries."

Mr. al-Qadi said the two leaders will discuss the latest developments on the Palestinian arena where the Palestinians elected their legislative council and the progress in Syrian-Israeli negotiations, in addition to the outcome of the latest visit by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to the region.

Mr. al-Qadi praised the Egyptian-Jordanian relations, saying that there "is an excellent degree of cooperation and coordination between both countries."

Jordan: Internal Dispute Reported in Islamic Action Front

JN1002135196 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
10 Feb 96 pp 1, 7

[Report by Sa'ida Kilani]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman — Some Islamic Action Front (IAF) members of Parliament are furious over their leadership's decision not to participate in the government of 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti. Deputy Dhib 'Abdallah (Amman) said IAF leaders were taking "unilateral decisions" without consultations with the front's executive bureau or with IAF deputies in Parliament. He said he will resign in protest.

IAF sources denied Dr. 'Abdallah's allegations and said they had no basis. "The leadership was mistaken," insisted Deputy 'Abdallah, who is also an IAF executive bureau member. "We heard about the meeting (between the front's leaders and Mr. al-Kabariti last week) from the street. They should have consulted us before

deciding not to participate in the government since (Mr. al-Kabariti's) government is different than the previous ones."

"I will not attend the front's regular meetings," Dr. Dhib declared. "There are some members who are expected to join me because they are not also satisfied with the leadership's performance."

Other IAF deputies who were cited by Dr. 'Abdallah dissenters said there were internal differences but it did not mean they were planning to defect.

Deputy 'Ahmad al-Kassassibah (al-Karak) said IAF deputies were "surprised to learn about the meeting and later...the decision not to participate in the government. We should have put the issue for an internal IAF vote since Mr. al-Kabariti is different from other former prime ministers. What if he (had) made a (good) offer?" However, "I might be disappointed (in the front's leadership)...but that does not mean I'm going to boycott its meetings or resign," stressed Mr. al-Kassassibah. He said he believed that the differences will be solved internally.

The reasons behind Dr. 'Abdallah's threats of resignation might be based on considerations other than the leadership's meeting with the premier, he said. Anyhow, "we will try to convince him to go back on his decision," he said. Dr. 'Abdallah nominated himself for the 1993 parliamentary elections without the IAF's consent. He won and was later lured into joining the front's 16-member bloc in Parliament.

IAF Secretary General Ishaq al-Farhan could not be reached on Friday. But sources close to the IAF

leadership described the differences as "routine" and said potential dissensions did not pose any threat to the front.

"They are creating all of this hue and cry just because they could not become ministers," one source said. "The leadership is authorised to talk on behalf of the front whenever something urgent comes up. They cannot tell the premier to wait before forming his Cabinet until they consult with all IAF members." The source added that the front held a meeting with the front's leading members one day after the consultations that Mr. al-Kabariti held with the leadership and briefed them on what happened with the premier. "Past experiences show that, without the front, they cannot achieve much. It is not in their interest to dissent," the source added.

Several splits have occurred within the IAF since it was formed in 1993. The most significant among them was the resignation of a leading IAF member, Ra'if Najm, along with 16 other independents three years ago. There was a confrontation pitting three IAF deputies (Hammam Sa'id, Ahmad al-Kufahi and 'Abd-al-Mun'im Abu-Zant) and the leadership last September over the deputies' absence at a House session dedicated for the discussions of laws related to lifting the boycott of Israel. The front decided to suspend the membership of the three for three months but the three criticised the measure as unacceptable since the front ruled on the case without their presence. The tension eased after the IAF decided to establish a central panel to rule on cases of violations by its members.

**Lebanon: Hizballah Labels U.S. Envoy's Remarks
'Insolent'**

*NC1002045196 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 2 Feb 96
p 2*

[FBIS Translated Text] Commenting on an AL-NAHAR interview with the new U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon, Richard Jones, Hizballah has issued the following statement:

Regardless of the many falsehoods in U.S. Ambassador Richard Jones' talk about the U.S. embargo on Lebanon and about the U.S. stance on Lebanon's future and the UN resolutions concerning it, we noted blatant hostility and arbitrary judgments by the ambassador in his interview on Hizballah, its deputies in the parliament, and its resistance to the Zionist occupation. According to Jones, Hizballah's terrorism stems from its concentrating its campaigns against "Israel." Hence, according to this criteria, anyone who belongs to Hizballah becomes a terrorist, including the party's deputies and representatives in the parliament representing a large segment of the Lebanese people. This means accusing the Lebanese people, who back the resistance in south Lebanon in their fight against the Israeli occupation of our sacred national soil, of terrorism.

The statement noted that this is a flagrant insult to the entire Lebanese people and the parliamentary institution and requires an apology to the people and its representatives.

The statement added: The ambassador, who knows nothing about Lebanon and has never set foot in it, is preparing to visit Lebanon for the first time and stay there as his country's representative. Despite his lack of knowledge and expertise, he does not hesitate to voice very candid views, even very insolent ones, on issues that do not concern the United States directly.

Hizballah's resistance against the "Israeli" occupation does not need a U.S. signature because it is a national, religiously sanctioned, and humanitarian duty. If Jones wants to say that the U.S. sanctions were imposed on Lebanon because of its resistance against the occupation, its refusal to negotiate directly and independently with the enemy, and because of its refusal to end the boycott of this enemy, then this means that Lebanon is being subjected to political sanctions. The claims by Washington and its ambassador that Americans are threatened in Beirut are baseless because no one feels such concern, but the Americans. In this sense the U.S. concern is political.

Washington, which accuses Hizballah of terrorism, has not decided to punish or encircle Hizballah alone, but to punish and encircle Lebanon, its officials, and people

in a way that exposes the falsity of all the declared U.S. stances that speak of Washington's support for Lebanon's independence and territorial integrity.

The U.S. ambassador's statements are an aggressive start by an employee who wants to be his country's representative in a country that has long suffered U.S. policy, its iniquities and hostility, and direct intervention in it through the U.S. navies that practiced international terrorism against its sons and also through its continuing backing for Zionist terrorism, as manifested by the lethal weapons supplied to the usurping entity, which uses them to shell and kill the Lebanese people daily and unceasingly. This highlights the major terrorist role practiced by the United States against the oppressed peoples. This is in addition to continued U.S. backing for Zionist terrorism and its blatant bias on its side.

The statement concluded by saying: If Jones' statements express the content of the speech he will make when he presents his credentials in Beirut, then the Lebanese authorities must protest strongly and refuse to accept such messages, which reflect the tactlessness of those who write and convey them and their ignorance of and disrespect for the norms of diplomatic, political, and humanitarian relations between free states and peoples.

**Lebanon: Hizballah's al-Musawi Assails U.S.
'Anti-Iran Activities'**

*LD1202120396 Tehran IRNA in English
1122 GMT 12 Feb 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Damascus, Feb. 12, IRNA — A leader of the Lebanese Hizballah, Seyyed Husayn al-Musawi, said here on Monday that the U.S. move in allocating dls. 20 million for anti-Iran activities is sign of disrespect for all nations of the region.

Speaking to IRNA here, he added that this terrorist act of the U.S. is an insult on Islam and the Muslim nations all over the world. The Islamic Republic of Iran is determined to revive Islam and Islam belongs to all nations in the region, added the Hizballah leader.

If any other country had taken such an action, the Zionist regime and the west immediately would have launched an attack against it, said al-Musawi adding that allocation of dls. 20 million by the U.S. to carry out anti-Iran operations indicates total failure of all the White House's plots against the Islamic revolution. He further said that allocation of the sum is a clear proof of the U.S. defeat in its attempt to isolate Iran economically.

According to al-Musawi, allocation of the amount which has been sponsored by the Zionists, will produce nothing but another shame for the U.S.

Lebanon: Hizballah Condemns Events 'Against Population' in Bahrain*NC0902182596 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 26 Jan 96 p 3*

[FBIS Translated Text] Hizballah has issued the following statement on the detentions and other developments in Bahrain:

Reports from Bahrain speak of bloody clashes and large-scale detentions carried out by the authorities against the population. This prompts us to warn against the turn of events there, a turn on which the Bahraini authorities are apparently insisting by disregarding just, popular, constitutional, and political demands and through their effort to stifle freedoms, including freedom of worship and visits to mosques. These practices through which the authorities are trying to prove that they are in control of events will increase the discontent, confrontation, and conflagration. What is required is not to suppress popular demands, but to discuss and implement them to ensure the country's social and political stability and to avert further internal discord and discontent resulting from the authorities' misbehavior and their dictatorial methods in running the affairs of the country and the people. Leveling accusations at foreign quarters will not lessen the gravity of the crisis. Everybody knows that the problem in Bahrain is one of a political majority—not confessional or sectarian—against a political minority that is trying to monopolize power and the fate of the nation and that is refusing to recognize the right of the people to parliamentary representation and holding public posts. The country is being run on the whim of the authorities, a whim regarded as law, while real laws, concepts, human rights values, and respect for freedom of expression are being ignored.

We call on the Bahraini Government to stop its repressive practices against the civilian population and to release all prisoners and detainees. We also urge serious and real dialogue that is not a cover for procrastinating and that does not sideline the rights of the people and their just demands.

Lebanon: Suspected Killer of Hizballah Official Surrenders*NC0902212896 Beirut AL-ANWAR in Arabic 5 Feb 96 p 1*

[FBIS Translated Text] Judicial sources have stated that a Lebanese citizen sentenced to death in absentia for his involvement in a 1994 car bomb explosion in Bi'r al-'Abd in Beirut's Southern Suburb in which [Hizballah official] Fu'ad Mughanniyah and two others were killed surrendered to the Lebanese authorities yesterday.

The sources said the military authorities arrested Tawfiq Nasir on his arrival in Beirut from Argentina via Paris. A Lebanese police officer met him in Paris and escorted him on an Air France flight to Beirut.

Lebanon: Government Not To Restrict Press Freedom*NC1102134196 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Information Minister Farid Makari has said that the government has preserved the rights of the graduates of the information college and media employees by giving them appropriate terms and conditions to organize the operation of the media establishments. He said:

[Begin Makari recording] I see concern about the future in many of your eyes. I can certainly understand the reasons for your puzzlement. However, an official is dutybound to look ahead and at the same time act on present concerns and apprehension.

In the past few days we have heard a great deal of talk, some of which was constructive criticism that we accept to improve performance and be more responsive to the Lebanese people's aspirations and ambitions. Other criticism is subversive and seeks to weaken stability and to return the country to an atmosphere of anxiety and apprehension that could destroy the growing confidence in Lebanon and abroad. [passage omitted]

Friends: I reiterate to you and through you that freedom in Lebanon, particularly information freedom, is quite healthy. Do not fear for freedom, but do fear those who violate and exploit it. No one, however important, can harm freedom because that would mean harming Lebanon.

What the government is doing to organize the media in Lebanon, particularly the audio and visual media, is primarily intended to organize the media organs and not to restrict or confiscate them. We realize, just as you do, that safeguarding freedom is a sacred duty, for they are the pillars of Lebanon's existence without which there is no justification for the state's existence. Freedom of expression is safeguarded by the Constitution. We are committed to safeguarding the Constitution and the principles of national accord. By setting appropriate terms and conditions for the organization of the media organs, the government preserves your rights and guarantees you a proud livelihood. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Lebanon: Franjiyah Criticizes Prime Minister, Media Law

NC0902194796 *Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic*
1915 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Former Minister [and current deputy in the Lebanese Parliament] Sulayman Franjiyah has stated that something is wrong with the Lebanese State. He described Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri as a second 'Arafat, saying that al-Hariri is trying to replace the State and to possess it with the power of money instead of the power of arms. Franjiyah rejected President Ilyas al-Hirawi's proposal that the parliamentary elections be held in two phases. He said the adoption of districts as electoral constituencies does not achieve national cohesion, but entrenches sectarianism. He expressed his support for five electoral constituencies representing Lebanon's five provinces.

Regarding the media, Franjiyah said everybody demands that the media be streamlined but there must not be a law that aims to close opposition television stations. He said talk that Lebanon can have only a limited number of television and radio stations is not correct.

Lebanon: Efforts To Counter Government's Media Policy Continue

NC1002211696 *Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic*
2015 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Audio and Visual Media Committee [formed to counter government media policy] continued its contacts to emphasize the importance of media pluralism against attempts to curb the media. The committee today visited former prime minister 'Umar Karami in Tripoli and former minister and current deputy Sulayman Franjiyah in Bnash'i. The committee consisted of Voice of Lebanon Director General Shaykh Simon al-Khazin, Pierre 'Azar, Sa'id Franjiyah, Ghalib Qandil, Tanyus Du'aybis, and 'Uthman Majdhub.

Karami said the country is being kidnapped, and the kidnapper is known. He warned against a revolution, saying that the country is sitting on the mouth of a volcano. He said the issue is not that of the technical report [which was approved by the government on 7 February to regulate Lebanese media] or the number of radio and television stations. The issue, he explained, is one of freedom; that is, the need for multiple media to ensure freedom of expression for all Lebanese groups. He said: We will continue the battle until the end, no matter what the sacrifices. What will happen on 29 February [a strike called for by the labor federation and other forces] is only an indication of the volcano that

will follow and of the frustration that will lead to the explosion, Karami said.

For his part, Deputy Sulayman Franjiyah stressed the need for media pluralism during his meeting with the committee delegation. In a statement issued in the name of the committee, Ghalib Qandil expressed the appreciation of the media men for Franjiyah's firm support to media freedom.

Lebanon: Defense Minister—No Attacks Against Israel After Pullout

NC0902174496 *Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic*
1630 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Reacting to recent statements by Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres, National Defense Minister Muhsin Dallul asked: What prevents Israel from implementing the international resolutions that call for Israel's withdrawal from south Lebanon, notably Security Council Resolution 425? Dallul stressed that the Lebanese Army is now ready to assume the security mission in the south and that no operation [against Israel] will be staged from Lebanon after Israel's withdrawal from Lebanese territory.

Minister Dallul urged debate on President Ilyas al-Hirawi's proposal for two-stage parliamentary elections. Such debate, he said, should produce positive results to close the gaps in this proposal and help to ensure true and representative elections.

Minister Dallul was speaking at a popular seminar in the town of Niha in Zahlah District. A large crowd of townspeople and nearby villagers attended the seminar. Dallul said President al-Hirawi's election proposal is an initiative offered by his excellency for discussion.

Lebanon: 'Resistance' Attacks Israeli Posts

NC1002103396 *Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic*
0900 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The resistance has issued a statement saying that in retaliation to Israeli assaults, one of its groups carried out a fierce and concentrated attack against a hostile Israeli post in Humayd this morning. The resistance fighters succeeded in destroying a redoubt housing a 12.7-mm machine gun and several fortifications.

Another resistance group attacked the occupation forces' post in Rshaf with machine gun and rocket fire, inflicting casualties on the enemy.

The occupation forces began a fierce bombardment of the outlying parts of Haris, Sribbin, and Yatar with 81-mm, 120-mm, and 155-mm mortars from their positions in Balat and Yarin.

Lebanon: Amal Carries Out Attacks; SLA Desertions Continue*NC1002181896 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
1630 GMT 10 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli occupation forces artillery emplacements in 'Ali al-Tahir and Qal'at al-Shaqif shelled the outskirts of 'Arab Salim and the Sujud woods this morning.

In retaliation, Amal Movement groups attacked Tallat Humayyid and Rshaf, using rockets and machine guns. A statement issued by the movement said direct hits were scored against the two posts, resulting in casualties and the destruction of weapons and fortifications.

It was reported this afternoon that an explosive charge went off as a Lahd militia [South Lebanese Army—SLA] patrol passed on the Bra'shit Road. A patrol member was wounded and taken to a hospital in Israel. Security sources said the resistance attacked the occupation forces post in Bra'shit with rockets.

Meanwhile, reports coming in from the occupied border strip indicate that [SLA Commander] Antoine Lahd is in a hopeless situation and frustrated. He spends some nights outside his home in Marj 'Uyun and sometimes sleeps in the barracks in an attempt to elude resistance attacks. The reports say that Lahd is under strict protection by 100 Israeli intelligence members who accompany him on his movement. The reports add that desertion from the Lahd militia is continuing. The latest incident was the fleeing of Adib Haddad, commander in charge of the militia's 10th corps in al-Rayhan, to an unknown destination.

Lebanon: Islamic Resistance Carries Out Operations*NC1102091796 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed
in Arabic 0630 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[Dispatch by correspondent Samir 'Alami]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] On the occasion of the blessed month of Ramadan, the Islamic Resistance scored further successful operations against the enemy and his agents [South Lebanese Army, SLA], inflicting many casualties.

On the al-Tayyibah-al-Qantarah road, Islamic Resistance fighters ambushed an agent mechanized patrol,

using machine guns and rockets. The Martyr Hasan al-Zayn Unit bombarded the al-Qantarah position, scoring direct hits. Elsewhere, an agent armored personnel carrier [APC] was destroyed on the Bra'shit-Kunin road by an explosive charge detonated by an Islamic Resistance unit. The photographs displayed by the Islamic Resistance last night show how the APC received direct hit and was destroyed.

Meanwhile, the occupation forces bombarded the outskirts of Qabrikhah, Tulin, Wadi al-Saluqi, and Wadi al-Hujayr last night with various calibers of shells. Zionist helicopters flew over the areas, dropping flares. [passage omitted]

According to reports from the occupied border strip, agent [SLA Commander] Antoine Lahd is frustrated and suffers from anxiety attacks. He spends most of his time in the Marj 'Uyun barracks under strict Zionist security. Lahd has canceled all his appointments, including with his agents because he no longer trusts them. The reports add that agent Adib Haddad, commander of the 10th Battalion in al-Rayhan region, has deserted and escaped to an unknown destination.

Lebanon: Israeli Forces End Siege of Southern Coastline*NC1202093996 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic
0900 GMT 12 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The NATIONAL NEWS AGENCY correspondent in Tyre has reported that the Israeli occupation forces today ended their naval siege of the southern coastline starting north of Sidon and ending at Ra's al-Bayyadah in the south.

Fishermen at Tyre Port estimated their monthly losses at 100 million pounds for the price of the fish and tens of thousands of dollars for the fishing nets the enemy's navy regularly tears and cuts. The Southern Council, which has been following the siege, will compensate all the fishermen with 300,000 Lebanese pounds for each fisherman and boat.

Elsewhere, the Israeli occupation forces this morning shelled al-Dabshah, the Iqlim al-Tuffah Heights, particularly al-Jabal al-Akhdar, Mazra'at al-Hamra', the towns of Yuhmur and Arnun, and the deserted army barracks in al-Nabatiyah.

Syria: Water Talks With Iraqi Delegation Begin

JN1002131596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1215 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus — A joint Syrian-Iraqi technical committee on water began its meeting at the Ministry of Irrigation this morning. The committee is led by Engineer Ibrahim Bahhul, director of land reclamation, and 'Abd-al-Sattar Salman Husayn, first under secretary in the Iraqi Ministry of Irrigation. The talks will last five days.

The committee will study technical issues related to the waters of the Euphrates River, the projects Turkey is carrying out along the watercourse, and the effect of these projects on the flow of water to other countries. In addition, the committee will exchange technical information on joint waters and study cooperation and coordination within the context of international law and treaties.

Syria: Officials Cited on Water Talks With Iraq

JN1002131896 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1200 GMT 10 Feb 96

[Report by Thana' al-Imam in Damascus]

[FBIS Translated Text] Meetings of the Iraqi-Syrian joint committee on developments related to the Tigris and Euphrates waters and joint measures to deal with strategic projects in the Euphrates basin in Turkey began in Damascus today, said 'Abd-al-Sattar Salman Husayn, an under secretary in the Iraqi Irrigation Ministry and the head of the Iraqi delegation.

Munib al-Rifa'i, head of the legal department in the Syrian Foreign Ministry, told Radio Monte Carlo: We only want to apply international law and effect a just and acceptable distribution of shares so that we can implement appropriate projects and define the types of agriculture and the areas of land that we will reclaim in accordance with our water shares.

Al-Rifa'i asserts that the meeting will not end the crisis and that the problem requires a political decision by the foreign ministers of the three countries: Syria, Turkey, and Iraq. He expressed astonishment at Turkey's recent claims that it had asked Syria to hold such a meeting and that Syria did not respond. Al-Rifa'i noted that Syria appealed to Turkey in June and August to convene a meeting at the foreign minister level. These appeals were ignored.

Al-Rifa'i said that establishing a center for water studies in Damascus and the pollution of the Euphrates River will be placed on the agenda for the Arab League's ministerial conference.

'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Masri, of the Irrigation Ministry's Joint international Waters Department, said that the serious pollution of the Balikh, a major Euphrates tributary, is estimated at 500 milligrams per liter. He said this not only causes immediate damage to agriculture, because it contains high rations of phosphates and sulfates, but also causes environmental hazards and affects the drinking water, which is a very serious issue.

Al-Masri told Radio Monte Carlo that the pollution of the Sajur, which is another major Euphrates tributary, is also very serious because the Turks are dumping industrial waste into the water.

Syria: Christopher Aide Remains in Damascus for Economic Talks

MM0902151696 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 9 Feb 96 p 5

[Report by Ibrahim Humaydi: "Christopher's Envoy for Development Affairs Meets With Syrian Businessmen"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, occupied Jerusalem, AL-HAYAH — Diplomatic sources have confirmed to AL-HAYAH that Toni Verstanding, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for economic development affairs, met the day before yesterday with Dr. Ratih al-Shallah, chairman of the Damascus Chamber of Commerce, and a number of Syrian businessmen in the framework of meetings described by Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres as "of great importance."

Diplomatic sources in Damascus said that Verstanding stayed behind in Damascus after U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's departure with a view to holding "exploratory" meetings with Syrian public and private sector officials over "the economic situation in Syria."

The sources added that the meetings were held in the presence of David Rundell, trade attache at the U.S. Embassy in Damascus, and Marjorie Ransom, deputy of the U.S. ambassador. Rundell, who confirmed to AL-HAYAH that the meetings had taken place, named the businessmen who took part in the meetings.

Peres commended the fact that Verstanding remained in the Syrian capital, because the matter "is of great importance." He said: "Maybe a political agreement marks the end of the war, but an economic agreement could mark the beginning of peace."

Christopher pointed out that the U.S. official's task "is to find out from the Syrians what their priorities and aspirations are, and also to improve our database as regards their economic situation and needs," stressing that there is "an economic dimension" to the peace process.

Syria refused to send economic or water experts to the third and fourth rounds of negotiations at Wye Plantation, despite the presence of two economic experts in the Israeli delegation.

Nicholas Burns, spokesman for the U.S. secretary of state, told AL-HAYAH that Christopher "did not request" President Hafiz al-Asad to send economic experts to the next round, scheduled to be held on 26 February, although that is an Israeli demand. Walid al-Mu'allim, head of the Syrian delegation to the Maryland negotiations, announced recently that the Maryland negotiations dealt with "the prospects of the post-peace stage." U.S. officials said that the Syrian and Israeli delegations broached "economic questions, financial aid, and investment" in the Middle East.

The Syrian-U.S. meetings also aimed at discussing bilateral relations between Damascus and Washington. The latter had linked improving these relations to a breakthrough in bilateral negotiations between Syria and Israel, while Damascus wants to develop these relations as a guarantee for signing a peace agreement.

The inclusion of Syria on the U.S. list of states sponsoring terrorism is hampering the process of developing relations between the two sides. Secretary Christopher said that the establishment of peace would mean that the foundation has been laid "for improving our relations with Syria step by step...we hope that conditions will enable us to make judgments that would make these barriers ineffective."

On the periphery of Christopher's talks on Tuesday with President al-Asad and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar', Verstanding held a round of talks with the Syrians, including Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, Economy Minister Muhammad al-'Imadi, Finance Minister Muhammad Khalid al-Mahayni, and Planning Minister 'Abd-al-Rahim al-Subay'i.

Syria: Christopher, U.S. Praised for Peace Talks Stance

JN1102211996 Damascus SYRIA TIMES in English
7 Feb 96 p 5

[Editorial by Walid Shihadah]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In his message to President al-Asad conveyed by Secretary of State Warren Christopher, President Clinton reaffirmed his country's commitment and his personal interest in the talks on the Syrian-Israeli track. He added in his message that he is ready to help the parties achieve just and comprehensive peace in the region. Secretary Christopher in the meantime presented American views concerning the Syrian-Israeli talks which were discussed.

Earlier, at a joint press conference with Israeli Premier Shim'on Peres in Israel following this talks, Mr. Christopher said he had gone a long way for peace. He emphasized that the American Administration of President Bill Clinton will continue the drive for peace, pushing for a settlement even though Israel would hold early elections.

Mr. Christopher gave an assessment of the Maryland talks between Syrian and Israeli negotiators and said Syria and Israel had laid common grounds for a peace accord that we hope will be realized "taking into account the needs of each side on the security level." Mr. Christopher has in fact been doing all he can to push the peace process towards its set target, namely just and comprehensive peace. After this very long way he says he hopes he will be able by the end of his current tour to know the formula and what will be the centerpiece for the continuity of the negotiations, as it is clear that a lot has to be done.

In fact the American clear statement about each side's security needs converges with Syria's call for equal, reciprocal and parallel security arrangements. Syria has not denied, nor will she deny, the security needs of any side. Her call for equal and parallel arrangements on both sides of the pre-June-1967 lines embodies her belief in recognizing the rights of others as much as she insists on her own rights. But what the Israelis are doing or demanding in their negotiations with Syria is completely different. They are anxious to ensure the security arrangements they want even if this touches upon, or breaks the security of Syria, or any other side.

Syrian cannot accept such double-standard dealing. She understands that as she cares for her own security, others also care for theirs. When arrangements are taken on equal measures and on parallel lines the needs of each party will have been fulfilled. In this the American stand voiced by Mr. Christopher at the joint press conference with Peres echoes the Syrian demand.

Furthermore, the so many visits and shuttles made by the chief of American diplomacy is a new confirmation of the strong American interest in seeing the Middle East peace process end, but it must end according to the principles set for it and for achieving its target which is just and comprehensive peace. The Israeli intransigent stand which is surfacing again must not be allowed to block the talks once again as it did under former Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. This intransigence is coming again. And the American mission right now ought to prevent this intransigence from attaining its aims. Mr. Christopher must be having a hard time in keeping the talks on track.

Syria: Damascus Radio Hopes for Improved Israeli Position

JN0902162596 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1240 GMT 9 Feb 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The foreign minister has conveyed a message from President Hafiz al-Asad to Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi briefing him on the outcome of his talks with U.S. Secretary Warren Christopher and the latest developments in the peace process.

It is known that consultation between Presidents al-Asad and al-Hirawi has now become an established tradition in view of the link between the interests of the two countries and the inseparability of the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. The unity of the two tracks has become a fact, which was confirmed by developments. It embodies a deep conviction by the Lebanese and Syrian officials and reflects the facts of history, geography, same destiny, and the common struggle to regain the two countries' territory and rights.

Following Christopher's talks with President Hafiz al-Asad, Syria agreed to resume the peace talks in Maryland in response to the U.S. proposals and out of a deep belief in peace and the need to make the Middle East break free from the cycle of wars and conflicts. All international quarters welcomed the Syrian response and considered it another proof of Syria's credibility and determined endeavor to achieve a just and comprehensive peace. These quarters hoped this constructive Syrian step would be met by an Israeli step that would remove the obstacles facing the progress of talks, especially since peace with Syria will lead to peace with Lebanon and to the comprehensive peace in the region. Syria is the basic partner. A great number of Arab states stressed that there can be no peace with Israel and that ties of cooperation cannot be established without achieving peace with Syria. This dictates that Israel should implement the UN Security Council resolutions

and withdraw, in full, from the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon.

In fact, the Maryland talks in the past two months should have achieved tangible progress if Israel responded positively to the conditions and facts of peace. Syria offered a full peace in return for complete Israeli withdrawal, which is coupled with even [muta'adilah] and equitable [mutakafi'ah] security arrangements on both lines of 4 June 1967. What prevented this desired progress is Israel's exaggeration of its security concerns and its dealing with the negotiations as if the matter concerns a security agreement and not a peace agreement guaranteed by the international community that would return to each party its rights and entrench the power of international law and the UN principles and charters. Observers hope that this time Israel will respond positively, in sincerity and responsibility, to the requirements of peace, especially since peace cannot be established when the security of a certain party is disrupted. Given the fact that Israel possesses a huge arsenal of conventional and nonconventional offensive weapons, there is no alternative to symmetrical [mutanazirah] and even [muta'adilah] arrangements.

The international quarters, particularly the United States, recognize that peace cannot be achieved without Syria and Lebanon. It is, therefore, important for Israel to accept the principles of equitable security [takafu' amni] and complete withdrawal. Also, it should not place any other interest above the interest of peace. Undoubtedly, the Maryland talks on 26 February will provide a new opportunity. All conditions are there to achieve the just, firm peace, including Syria's sincere response, the United States' sure determination, and the desire of the entire world community. There is nothing to prevent the desired progress except the Israeli position, which we hope will rise to the level of the cause of peace and its principles and facts to achieve the just peace that would provide security and stability to the people of the region and to the world.

Afghanistan**Afghanistan: Faction Leader Views Transfer of Power From Rabbani***BK0902153896 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 9 Feb 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Leaders of different Afghan factions continued their consultations in Islamabad today in an attempt to hammer out a solution for the establishment of a broad-based government in Afghanistan. Former president of Afghanistan and Chairman of the Supreme Coordination committee and head of Afghanistan's National Islamic Liberation Front Sebghatollah Mojaddedi held in-depth talks with General 'Abdol Rashid Dostam who heads Jombesh-e Melli-ye Eslami Party of Afghanistan. Later, the deputy leader of Hezb-e Wahdat-Khalili group, (Ostad Mohaqqiq) and Dr. (Sadeq Modabbir) of Harakat-e Eslami also participated in the parleys. Talking to PTV correspondent, Azhar Masood, Sebghatollah Mojaddedi said:

[Begin Mojaddedi recording] I am not sure that Rabbani is sincere with this cause, which he said. If he is sincere, he could do it in one day. But, it is not enough that he says that I shall step down, I shall resign, I shall transfer the power. But, he must say it in past tense. He said I have stepped down, I have transferred the power, so that we believe this. Because he had promised this to the United Nations several times. Ninety percent of the Afghanistan areas are controlled by other people, not by Rabbani. Rabbani is in one, two provinces only, and also half of these provinces. It seems [words indistinct] no vacancy for power. But the formula is that ...[Mojaddedi changes thought] Once he had announced that to whom I shall transfer the power, I gave him an answer that do you think you are the only personality in Afghanistan, there is no personality in Afghanistan? You can call ('two) of these leaders, you call them and transfer the power. [end recording]

PTV has learned that another important Afghan leader, Golboddin Hekmatyar, will be arriving in Islamabad tomorrow to joint collective consultation tomorrow.

Afghanistan: 'Influential' Leaders Hold 'Crucial' Meeting in Islamabad*BK1102095696 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The leaders of Supreme Coordination Council — the four-party Afghan alliance opposing Kabul administration — held the first round of crucial talks in Islamabad yesterday to devise a joint strategy to resolve the crisis in Afghanistan. Pir Seyyed Ahmad Shah Gilani, the National Islamic Movement leader, joined the council meeting that was attended by

Hezb-e Eslami Chief Engineer Golboddin Hekmatyar, [Jombesh-e Melli] President General Rashid Dostam, National Islamic Movement Chief Professor Sebghatollah Mojaddedi, and Ostad Muhaqqiqi representing Hezb-e Wahdat-Khalili group.

APP quoted Afghan sources as saying Seyyed Ahmad Gilani's participation in the meeting is considered a major development. The influential Afghan leaders are likely to continue their discussions today.

Afghanistan: Supreme Coordination Council Meets in Islamabad*BK1102112196 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The leaders of Supreme Coordination Council of Afghanistan held another round of talks in Islamabad today to find a common ground for restoration of peace in their country. The meeting was attended by the head of Jombesh-e Melli-ye Afghanistan, General Rashid Dostam, Hezb-e Eslami Chief Mr. Golboddin Hekmatyar, Ostad Muhaqqiqi of Hezb-e Wahdat, Mr. Zabiollah Mojaddedi of Jabha-e Nejat-e Melli and Pir Seyyed Ahmad Gilani of National Islamic Movement. Radio Pakistan's diplomatic representative says they exchanged views on various proposals put forward by each of them as well as the proposals of the UN special envoy, Mr. Mahmoud Mestiri.

Some prominent Afghan leaders representing various factions met the chief of the Jombesh-e Melli-ye Afghanistan, General Rashid Dostam, separately in Islamabad today. Those who met him Hezb-e Eslami Chief Mr. Golboddin Hekmatyar, National Islamic Movement Chief Pir Seyyed Ahmad Gilani and the governor of Nangarhar Province, (Hajji Abdolgadoi). A spokesman for General Dostam, Mawlawi Abdolbake told our representative that all the leaders agreed to work together for transfer of power from President Rabbani to an interim broad-based set up. These leaders exchanged views on mechanism for transfer of power.

Afghanistan: Faction Leaders Continue Talks in Islamabad*BK1202113596 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 12 Feb 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Afghan leaders, now in Islamabad, continue their efforts and consultations to hammer out a peaceful solution to the Afghan crisis.

Meanwhile, the leader of Jombesh-e Melli-ye Afghanistan General 'Abdol Rashid Dostam called on President Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari at Aiwan-i-Sadar [president house] today and apprised him of

the ground realities of the prevailing situation in his country. Their meeting lasted for over an hour. Another Afghan leader, Chief of Hezb-e Eslami, Mr. Golboddin Hekmatyar, had a meeting with the interior minister, Retired Major General Nasirullah Khan Babar, in Islamabad this morning.

The Supreme Coordination Council is holding its another meeting in Islamabad this morning. At its meeting late last night, the council discussed various options available for an early end to the current turmoil in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan: UN Envoy Fears 'Battle of Kabul' by Factions

BK1002152496 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] On the third consecutive day today, Islamabad witnessed a flurry of diplomatic activity with UN secretary general's envoy, Mr. Mahmoud Mestiri, holding direct negotiations with the leader of Jombesh-e Melli-ye Eslami, General Rashid Dostam. The agenda remained establishment of peace and a broad-based government in Afghanistan, but after the exit of Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani. During the meeting, General Rashid Dostam spoke on the irritants in international and regional efforts to bring an end to the civil strife. PTV Correspondent Azhar Masood understands that General Rashid Dostam in clear terms informed Mr. Mestiri that in the recent past Ukraine had supplied 30 jet fighter aircraft to the forces of Ahmad Shah Mas'ud and India was busy in supplying military hardware as well as other assistance to the forces of Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Mas'ud. He said this interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs has jeopardized the efforts of the United Nations and other regional powers like Pakistan and Iran for establishment of peace in Afghanistan. Mr. Dostam offered complete cooperation to the United Nations and Pakistan's efforts for achieving peace in Afghanistan. He, however, suggested that Kabul should be demilitarized if the United Nations wants to implement its proposals of peace.

Later, talking to PTV Correspondent Azhar Masood, Mr. Mahmoud Mestiri said:

[Begin recording] [Mestiri] Today is the day... [changes thought] time is not for exaggerated optimism, but still we are optimistic and still we hope to avoid this Kabul battle and to come to the only solution possible — a negotiated one — for peace between all Afghans.

[Masood] What is your agenda for peace in Afghanistan?

[Mestiri] For agenda, I would like first to avoid the battle of Kabul. This is our first priority, and then we will have time to talk and sit together and to put Afghans together. There is a possibility and there is also help from the neighboring countries.

[Masood] How are you going to implement an overall UN plan for peace in Afghanistan if you [words indistinct] war for Kabul.

[Mestiri] We cannot start any plan before stopping the war in Kabul because it is terrible war, it is for everyone, for civilians, for innocent people and for all Afghans.

[Masood] You have been consulting Afghan leaders as well as leaders of Pakistan and Iran. What is the consensus, which you have found?

[Mestiri] There is no total consensus for the time being, but for that I am working with them for a consensus. All of them want peace. All of them say they have some ideas for peace, but I am afraid this battle of Kabul will happen.

[Masood] Do you foresee Rabbani stepping out before....

[Mestiri interrupting] Yes, of course. Every plan would start with transfer of power from Rabbani to personality, which is acceptable to everybody. [end recording]

Afghanistan: Hekmatyar Meets UN Envoy Mestiri, Iran's Borujerdi

LD0902181496 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Brother Golboddin Hekmatyar, the mojahed leader of the Hezb-e Eslami-ye Afghanistan [Islamic Party of Afghanistan], has met UN special envoy Mahmoud Mestiri and Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi.

A Radio Message of Freedom correspondent reports from Jalalabad city that Brother Hekmatyar, the mojahed leader of the Hezb-e Eslami, yesterday afternoon met UN special envoy to Afghanistan Mahmoud Mestiri at the headquarters of Nangarhar Province's 1st Army Corps.

During this meeting, mojahed Brother Hekmatyar informed Mestiri about the current political-military situation in the country and expressed Hezb-e Eslami's readiness toward a settlement of the conflict in the country.

The report adds that during this meeting Mestiri — while not having a specific plan — informed Hekmatyar about his latest visit to Afghanistan and his separate

meetings with rulers of the Kabul administration and the leaders of the Taleban group.

According to the same report, on 7 February Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ala'eddin Borujerdi held talks with Brother Hekmatyar at the headquarters of Nangarhar Province 1st Army Corps on the country's current political-military situation.

It should be said that Brother Hekmatyar, accompanied by jihadi commanders of Laghman Province, on [words indistinct] arrived in Nangarhar Province from Metarlam, the center of Laghman. He was warmly welcomed by some members of the jihadi council of Nangarhar Province and Hezb-e Eslami commanders.

The report adds that later Hekmatyar met a number of commanders of the Hezb-e Eslami commanders, including the commander of Nangarhar Province 1st Army corps, Fazelhaq Mojahed, Mawlawi Ata'ollah, Engineer 'Abdol Ghafar, and some other jihadi personalities and discussed the current crisis in the country.

Afghanistan: Council Session Discusses Talks, Kabul Supplies

LD1102181596 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] During the High State Council [HSC] session, it was strongly urged that the Islamic State of Afghanistan was ready to facilitate a meeting of the esteemed jihadi leaders and all concerned forces inside the country, because the only reliable way of resolving issues is through understanding and negotiation. The secretariat of the HSC reported to us that the session was held today under the chairmanship of esteemed Professor Borhanoddin Rabbani, president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan and chairman of the HSC.

The military and political situation in the country and the positive changes and developments that have come about as a result of talks with the concerned parties were discussed first. During the session, the previous statements of the council and President Rabbani's [words indistinct] were described as a preface to a new political move towards the peaceful solution to these issues.

The Islamabad meeting, which is being held with the participation of the opposing groups' leaders and representatives, was considered. The HSC said that the aim of any meeting should be the restoration of peace and the cessation of hostilities. The HSC is of the opinion that meetings will be very effective if they are held inside the country, i.e. in the capital or in a province. The Islamic State of Afghanistan has taken the first step in this connection.

During today's HSC session, talks were held on the prices of primary goods, how to transport them to Kabul, and how to distribute them to the people. The esteemed Mohammad Yunus Qanuni, acting minister of defense and head of the Kabul Security Commission, presented a report on the activities of the commission and said: The Security Commission of Kabul is working in two directions in order to provide residents of Kabul with better conditions and to alleviate problems. They are [words indistinct] and to prevent goods being taken out of Kabul. He said: Reliable security posts have been set up along the roads; therefore, traders can confidently bring their merchandise to the city.

Afghanistan: 2 Killed in Missile Attacks on Kabul

LD0902221596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Residential areas of Kabul were subjected to missile attacks on Friday [9 February].

According to a Central News Unit report from Kabul, Afghan Defense Ministry sources announced that 11 missiles and heavy weapon shells hit various parts of Kabul on Friday, leaving two people dead and six wounded and damaging residential areas.

At the same time Kabul television on Friday night reported an air raid by government bombers on Taleban positions and concentrations in southern Kabul.

Afghanistan: Government Air Raids Kill 18 Taleban Troops

LD1002151296 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Dari 1430 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Last night the Taleban fired six rockets into residential areas of Kabul city. The rockets hit the residential areas at 1920. No loss of life has been reported, but three houses were partially damaged.

As a result of Air Force bombing yesterday, 18 Taleban were killed in the south and west of Kabul. The Air Force bombers heavily bombarded the Taleban concentration bases in Bagh-e Zakhira, Chara Asiah, and Maydanshar yesterday in response to their rocket attacks on Kabul. As a result, 17 [as heard] of Benazir Bhutto's Taleban were killed and a number of others were injured. Some of the enemy fortifications were also destroyed.

Afghanistan: Government Planes Attack Taleban

*LD1102094796 Tehran IRNA in English
0652 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Feb. 11, IRNA — Scores of Taleban commanders and militiamen were killed or wounded when government fighter planes bombarded their positions on Friday (9 February), the Afghan Defense Ministry reported Saturday night.

According to the ministry, the air raids were in retaliation to shelling of Kabul by the Taleban in which at least four troop concentration centers of the Taleban in Charasiab and Maydanshar were pounded.

Eight persons were killed and a number of others were wounded in the air raids while fortifications of the Taleban were destroyed.

The Taleban has confirmed the air attacks and sustaining of casualties.

Afghanistan: Government Troops Defect to Opposition

*LD1102150596 (Clandestine) Radio Message of
Freedom in Pashto
to Afghanistan 0230 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] A 100-strong Kabul administration unit has joined the High Coordination Council [HCC] force. A responsible source from Hezb-e Es-lami's Shahid Qazi Jawed Unit in Samangan Province reported to us that on 7 February a 100-strong group commanded by Mullah Talab and Mullah Nader joined Qazi Gholam Sakhi's mojahedin group, associated with the HCC, in Roi Doab District. The source added that the defecting group has surrendered to the HCC forces two DSK [antiaircraft machine guns], two ZK1 [machine guns], five rocket launchers, five PK machine guns, one piece of 75mm artillery, and two arms and ammunition depots.

Afghanistan: Shelling Continues; 20 Killed in Helicopter Crash

*LD1202114796 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic
of Iran First Program Network in Persian
1030 GMT 12 Feb 96*

[FBIS Translated Text] The Afghan government forces and the Taleban group exchanged fire last night in the southern regions of Kabul. Quoting Afghan Government sources, the Central News Unit reports from Kabul that the shelling was concentrated in the Rish Khvor region but two residential areas in the southwestern parts of Kabul were also hit.

No information is available about the number of casualties and damage caused by the shelling and the attacks.

It has also been reported that all 20 people on board a Taleban helicopter were killed yesterday when it crashed on route to Qandahar from Ghazni [Province].

Afghanistan: Aid Agencies Say Kabul Humanitarian Crisis Not Over

*BK1102085596 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network
in English 0500 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Afghanistan, aid workers in the besieged capital are warning that Kabul's chronic humanitarian crisis may not be over despite the arrival of the first food and fuel supplies in three weeks. The warning came after Kabul's main eastern supply route was reopened on Wednesday [7 February] following a three-week blockade by a warring faction, which aid agencies had said could trigger a humanitarian catastrophe.

The International Committee of Red Cross has said 80 percent of the war-torn city's 1.2 million were potentially at risk from cold and malnutrition as they have no access to food or other basic supplies.

India

India Exchanges 'Heavy Gunfire' With Pakistan on Kashmir Border

*BK1102083996 Hong Kong AFP in English
0759 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] JAMMU, India, Feb 11 (AFP) — Indian and Pakistani troops traded heavy gunfire on their disputed Kashmir border, leaving at least one civilian injured on the Indian side, officials said Sunday.

Pakistani troops started the "unprovoked firing" late Saturday and it continued past midnight in the border area of Sambah, 45 kilometers (28 miles) from this winter capital of Kashmir state, the officials said.

A spokesman for India's Border Security Force (BSF) said the Pakistani gunfire involving medium and light machine guns was meant to provide cover "for Kashmiri and Pakistani terrorists trying to enter Kashmir."

The skirmishes broke a 12-day calm on the tense Kashmir border, where the armies of the two countries traded heavy fire from January 19 to 30, triggering fears of a larger conflict.

"The Pakistanis began firing from two border posts (Saturday)," the spokesman said. "The firing went on for almost three hours ... They used mainly medium weapons. More than 30,000 rounds were fired by them."

A villager was injured in the firing and hospitalised, officials said.

New Delhi accuses Islamabad of arming and training Moslem militants fighting to end Indian rule over Kashmir, where a bitter separatist campaign has left more than 12,000 people dead since 1989.

Pakistan denies the charge but gives open diplomatic support to the unrest, calling it a legitimate struggle for self-determination. Kashmir is India's only Moslem-majority state.

India and Pakistan dispute the ownership of Kashmir, and have fought two of their three wars over the picturesque province.

India: Pakistani Troops Resume 'Unprovoked Firing' in Kashmir

BK1102085196 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistani troops again resorted to unprovoked firing at Indian positions in Samba sector from across the border after the 12-day-long heavy firing in Akhnur sector last month. An official spokesman told our Jammu correspondent that the firing started around 2045 [1515 GMT] last night from Saiwanwali and Charwaha border pickets of Pakistan and continued for over two hours. Medium machine guns and universal machine guns were used by the Pakistani troops. There was no loss of life or property on the Indian side. The spokesman said that the apparent aim of the firing was to help the infiltration of trained militants into Indian territory.

India: Editorial—Some May Take CIA Report Seriously

BK1202113296 Delhi THE ASIAN AGE in English 10 Feb 96 p 10

[Editorial: "Another CIA Bogey"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In the Eighties, the catchword was balkanisation. India, said the Central Intelligence Agency in the aftermath of Indira Gandhi's assassination, would not be able to hold and disintegrate slowly. [sentence as published] This was, of course, the time when calling your political opponent a "CIA agent" was a very effective political insult. The CIA had no credibility as far as the Indian mind was concerned.

It may still not score very highly on the credibility factor, but that is not the real story. A section of the Indian middle class may take its latest report somewhat more seriously than they ever did; because the agency's prophecy about India "falling apart" coincides with large scale disgust with the political system. Cynicism accompanies the sense of disgust in an equal measure. The real import of the scandals that have been rocking

the composure of the nation is the ease with which certain anti-national forces have been able to suborn national security. It is not just the fact that this or that politician, or this or that political party, has been shown in poor light. What is even more unnerving is the cynical acceptance of such scandals within the general public; a "sab chalta hai" kind of an attitude, where every politician barring few is considered to be corrupt till such time that he or she is able to prove otherwise. In this overall scenario, brave and historically tenable assertions about India not being a banana republic sound less convincing to the man in the street.

The prospect of political instability that looms large on the horizon does not help matters either. Of course, it is not very fair to club India together with the likes of Bolivia, Armenia and so on. Democratic institutions in the country have shown exceptional resilience even during times of great stress, strong and autonomous enough for India not having to seek a "good boy" certificate from the likes of the CIA. But, having said that, it can really be nobody's case that national security has not become more vulnerable in recent times than it ever was, even during the troublesome days of rampant terror in Punjab and Kashmir. It is, indeed, a strange dichotomy: India is becoming an attractive market to hitherto somnolent suitors, but at the same time, it is becoming more porous to those wanting it to disintegrate.

The Purulia arms-dropping incident or the unchecked flow of foreign arms and funds into the Northeast are only the more available symptoms of a deep-rooted malaise. The Central Bureau of Investigation is still in the dark about the origin of the arms dropped in Purulia. Organisations and bodies whose concerns are certainly not pure and angelic mock at the Indian state apparatus with increasing brazenness. And then, of course, there is the cynicism factor. All this, if accompanied by uncertainty and instability at the top, will compromise national security even further.

Of course, India has proved its prophets of doom and gloom wrong countless times, but that does not mean that the rot within it does not run deep enough, or complacency is still the best policy. Over the last few weeks, for example, newspaper headlines have been screaming "scandal" with rather morbid regularity. With this, there has been a corresponding rise in popular disenchantment and consequent de-politicisation.

The real danger, which the CIA's theorists have not hinted at, emanates from the latter factor: if the Indian voter decides that no political party or coalition deserves his clear support, subversion will have that much more chance.

**India: Editorial—CIA Report Accompanied by
'Wishful Thinking'**

*BK1202114096 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES
in English 10 Feb 96 p 13*

[Editorial: "Cliched Forecast"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The imminence of India's disintegration has long remained a figment of the Westerners' imagination. From early '50s the US policy makers and global strategists set fanciful deadlines for the "falling apart" of subcontinental India. That the strategic assessment made by the Central Intelligence Agency has always been accompanied by wishful thinking is obvious. That is the reason why the CIA, against the evidence of the past four decades, is persisting with its forecast that India would be among sixteen countries of the world facing imminent disintegration. The sixteen include Pakistan (probably for the reasons as those applicable to India) and Bangladesh (which may disappear due to the effects of global warming and sea erosion).

Apart from palpable failures of the CIA's own efforts to destabilise governments and disintegrate countries round the world, the latest study comes out with the profound idea that the world's poor democracies that do not improve living standards are "exceptionally vulnerable". These are refinements of the CIA's forecast in the fifties when there was no talk of improvement in economic standards of the people. The tragedy with such assessments is that the West, especially the US, sets the ideal democratic conditions on the basis of its own experience and applies these very conditions to other countries without regard to the fact that there are societies like that of the Chinese and the Indians which have proved to be civilisational survivors despite low economic standards and discernible diversity of their people. The notion that poverty and democracy cannot go together has been decisively disproved by India in the past three decades and more. It is time the US government orders the CIA to conduct a study as to what holds India together rather than parrot the forecast of India falling apart.

Iran

Iran: Rafsanjani Marks Revolution Anniversary

*LD1102123596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic
of Iran First Program Network in Persian
0800 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[Speech by Iranian President 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani marking the 17th anniversary of the Islamic revolution at Azadi Square in Tehran — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful. [passage omitted] This

extraordinarily spectacular gathering at historic Azadi Square is very meaningful, constructive, and encouraging for the followers of Islam and the revolution. May God give you blessings, joy, and prosperity. [passage omitted] On the eve of the 18th year of the revolution — when it is compared with human beings — our revolution has come of age and to the point of perfection. The reality of [Azadi] Square depicts just that. Each year that is added to the age of our revolution we see it become stronger, more powerful, and more joyous. We see our strides in the path of revolutionary objectives become longer and our cries louder. On this route I believe you — the Muslim, revolutionary people — have the larger share.

Of course several factors must be emphasized — first, the appropriate Islamic bedstead of the revolution; the spiritual, heavenly atmosphere wrought by the Koran on which our Umma was nurtured. From within, it bestows on us security to safeguard our Umma from the effects of the poisons of the corrupt and immoral arrogant and Western culture. [passage omitted]

Second, the nature of our people themselves. [passage omitted] Another factor that has an essential share in the unity, solidarity, and participation of the people as well as the blossoming of the revolution is the divine leadership of the revolution. From the inception of the revolution, of the movement, our people relied on the peerless and historic leadership of their demised leader [Ayatollah Khomeyni] and today they rely on the guidance of the best pupil of their exalted imam, the eminent leader of the revolution [Ayatollah Khamene'i]. [passage omitted]

The fourth valuable factor that has put us in this arena and has given us pride is the nature of Iran itself. It is as if God had chosen Iran from the beginning for the birthplace of such a revolution during the space and nuclear age, the age of progress of sciences, the age of communications. If Islam appeared on the Arabian Peninsula — a place that was devoid of the values of the time — today the renaissance of Islam begins in a state, in a land that God has given everything. [passage omitted]

Another of God's blessings and one of the important factors in bringing pride to the revolution is having the spiritual support of Muslims and revolutionary human beings throughout the world. Today, when we are celebrating the anniversary of our revolution, in many countries in the world Muslim or non-Muslim honorable people are gathering and honoring this revolution with us and expressing their respect. You witnessed today the presence of one of those personalities — from a land that is known across the world for its animosity and

enmity against Islam. He comes to Iran from America and in the presence of millions declares loudly the pride of the world Muslims in the victory of the Islamic revolution under conditions in which his government legislates and sets aside money for the suppression of the revolution. Just look at the difference!

We have many serious supporters among such human beings throughout the world. This human being is the spokesman of more than 30 million oppressed Americans; that is, the blacks who throughout history have been — and still are being — exploited by the American colonialists and exploiters and monopolizers. One of the reasons for their love for us is that the Islamic revolution supports the oppressed throughout the world with its humanitarian and Islamic ideas. The largest oppressed stratum is in America today: the non-whites — the blacks, the red Indians, and other nationalities who are being exploited. It is the cries of justice by Islam that has penetrated every corner of the world and has brought receptive listeners in the arena around the world who seriously listen to the call of Islam. Let our enemies call that the export of the revolution. No fear! We have raised the cry of the Koran today and if this cry and call for justice is exporting the revolution, let us not fear such a description. This is not intervening in others' affairs. This is a declaration of the path to the people's salvation; this is the means to interconnect the freedom seeking and justice nurturing ideas of the world. [passage omitted]

it must be pointed out that the very existence of wicked enemies is a cause for unity, solidarity, and progress. The inexcusable mischief of the United States and its stooges has made our people even more aware. The people have awakened and learned that unity, solidarity, effort, thrift, greater labor, productivity, and safeguarding are among things needed for a period of development and progress for the revolution. We could have fallen to weakness and arrogance if there were no enemies. Their very existence has forced us to stay awake, to be aware, and to be prepared to defend our country and to remember our experiences in the sacred defense [Iran-Iraq war].

Today we see an example of people's extensive and active presence, as well as the presence of our brothers and sisters across the country. Before coming here, I read in reports that in all towns and villages across the country people have left their homes and are on the streets. Today, Islamic Iran is a sea of joy. I wish it was possible for us to watch these scenes together. Fortunately, the radio and television will gradually provide people with pictures of these glorious historic moments.

An interesting point materialized in today's gathering and our people clearly felt this and the people of the world will learn about it later. This was the fact that enmity between us and the United States is related to the U.S. Administration and not the American people. The representative of 30 million American blacks today expressed his love for the Islamic revolution. He represents 30 million voices. On the contrary, you see looters, torturers, bombers, terrorists, and fugitives in the United States today speaking against the Islamic revolution with the support of the U.S. Administration. Today, you have seen the bonds that exist between nations, as well as the mercenary forces abroad who are the mouthpiece for the arrogant powers against this honorable, brave, and ever-present nation. Look at the difference between the two.

Another important point that has been, thank God, established in the country and that has been an important factor in achievements, is the programming of our lives. The First Development Plan took Iran forward in great strides. God willing, during the Second Plan, Islam will materialize in a progressive and evolutionary country and will become a model for correct living.

The last point that I wish to tell the honorable people is about the elections. If today's scene and similar ones encourage the Islamic community across the world, which they do, your votes in the ballot box have an even deeper impact. Today's scene portrays the great popular manifestations and are epical. The ballot boxes manifest people's votes and ideas. People's experiences, beliefs, ideas, and wishes are manifested in the election votes. Your destiny is determined in by the small ballot slips. In a society such as ours, where no one can deny its popularity, voting is a definite Islamic and national duty. In a few days time the battlefield for this great test will begin again. The argument is not who you vote for. Where ever you are, you must chose with open eyes, with great care, after proper thinking and with an Islamic measure from among the candidates who should be thanked for providing all their means for serving their country and their revolution and for becoming candidates despite all difficulties. We must vote for those who we respect and know well. I have no doubt that in a free election and in an election in which the climate of decisionmaking is open to all, people's votes and ideas will manifest themselves in a way that will bring about the true interests of the revolution and the country. This is because peoples' conscience and public opinion do not usually make mistakes. It is possible for an individual to make a mistake, but when millions of people make a decision together, it is the product of a collective effort. In the world, in countries where they

think freely, they resort to public opinion to detect the correct path. Countries that suffer from the misfortune of dictatorship are deprived of the blessing of public opinion, as we were before the revolution. Today, as we have been bestowed with this blessing and as we have achieved freedom through our own efforts and labor — we must use it.

Finally, I must again thank you, the people, for your presence. I have been informed that streets leading to [Azadi] Square are so full that the majority of the marchers have not been able to reach Azadi Square. From this tribune I pay them my respects. [passage omitted]

Iran: Rafsanjani Addresses Crowd at Rally

LD1102103096 Tehran IRNA in English
0906 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Feb. 11, IRNA — Addressing the grand rally, President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, expressed condolences on the martyrdom anniversary of Imam Ali (AS), because of which this year the Iranian nation did not celebrate the anniversary of the victory of their revolution.

"This grand and glorious rally on the 18th year of the revolution is highly constructive, encouraging and meaningful for the followers of the late imam and officials of the country," the president told the rally.

"The huge crowd which has gathered here is the best and most valuable capital of the revolution and the most forceful power behind its progress and advance."

The president added that the revolution has now reached maturity and as each year passes, the revolution gathers further strength, power and dynamism, thanks to the committed people of Iran.

The revolution owes its victory and achievements to the presence of the people and their attitude towards the revolution which he said "have guarded it like a precious gem of a ring and love it as their own eyes."

One main factor behind unity of the people and flourishing of the revolution is the divine leadership of the revolution. Since the early days the nation relied on the leadership of the late imam and now on his true follower Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, added the Iranian president.

Another factor making the Iran proud, is its geographical location, abundant natural resources, proper climate, minerals, all of which are God's blessings.

Furthermore the revolution is proud of the spiritual support of the revolutionary Muslims throughout the world, and their full backing.

The Islamic revolution is loved by the entire Muslim world, he said. Many Muslims in other countries are celebrating the anniversary of the victory of the Islamic revolution and one example of it is the presence of Farrakhan at the ceremony here today. "He is the spokesman of more than 30 million oppressed American Muslims who for centuries have been exploited and oppressed by the U.S. ruling clique," he added.

"One reason that they love us is that the Islamic revolution supports Muslims throughout the world, from all races and all backgrounds, who are being oppressed. Let our enemies call this export of revolution, we do not fear this," he said adding that propagating the word of God and Koran is not interference in affairs of others.

"Our nation now sees it clearly that under the revolution, Islam and the sacrifices they have made the country is being built upon Islamic culture and values."

This, he said, has enabled the nation to embark on a massive construction projects and plants and now water, road, school, telephone, clinic and other facilities have been taken to the remotest areas of the country.

What was being plundered out of the country in the past is now being spent for the people. The genuine Islam is now introduced to the public, the true forces of Hezbollah are in charge of key management posts and engaged in reconstruction of the country, he added.

Enemies of the revolution have not ceased their plots but the nation knows that unity, hard work and being thrifty are the answer to the enemy plot. "The plots have made us alert. People here today realized that the hatred of the U.S. towards us is not the hatred of the American nation but that of the U.S. Administration. Representative of 30 million Americans here today expressed his love for the revolution and the Iranian people. This is the relation between the nations," said the president.

On Iran's development plans and projects, President Rafsanjani said that great leaps were taken forward in the course of the first five-year development plan and that God willing during the second plan Iran will present the best model for progress.

Turning to the March 8 elections for the 270-Majles, the president invited the public to once again demonstrate their active presence in the political scene of the Islamic Republic and prove their interest in the state affairs.

He said that massive presence of electorates will have an immense meaning and will demonstrate diversity of public viewpoints. "Your destiny is in these little ballots. Casting ballot is a definite religious and national responsibility."

President Rafsanjani added that people should vote for their candidate of their choice and for those whom they consider as the best custodian of Islam and the revolution.

In conclusion the president expressed his thanks to the public for attending the ceremony at Azadi Square, many of whom were unable to reach the square because of the massiveness of the crowd.

He also paid glowing tributes to the families of martyrs and all those who have contributed to the victory of the revolution.

Iran: Rafsanjani Addresses Muslim Representatives, Ambassadors

LD1002214296 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Zionist regime is an illegitimate regime and the Islamic Republic of Iran condemns the forceful and imposing measures conducted by the Zionists and will under no circumstances recognize them — this is a part of Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani's remarks made with Muslim representatives and ambassadors residing in Iran on Thursday, February 8. The Iranian president reiterated: Iran's foreign policy is based on friendship with all countries except the United States and the Zionist regime, and will welcome any country willing to expand ties with it in political, economic, and cultural fields.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, on Irano-U.S. ties, pointed out: Continuation of U.S. hostile measures against the Islamic Republic of Iran and America's unsparing support for the Zionist are among impediments in Irano-U.S. ties that have soured ties between Iran and Washington. The Iranian president also emphasized the boost of ties between Iran and the Third World countries, especially Muslim countries, as one of the priorities in Iran's foreign policy. It is to be noted Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani's meeting with Muslim countries officials has taken place on the eve of the Islamic revolution's victory.

Political analysts believe the victory of the Islamic revolution has had great influence at international and regional levels, clearing the way for a boost in the world Muslim's vigilance and awareness. Iran's nature of combating oppression and imperialism from the very beginning prompted Western countries, especially America, to take tough measures against the Islamic Republic of Iran, trying to tarnish Iran's image throughout the world. However, Iranian officials' principled posturings in facing different international issues have demonstrated how greatly Tehran adheres to international rules and regula-

tions. Presently, Iran's role in establishing peace and security in the region is known to all. Iran's peace-seeking efforts in Tajikistan and Afghanistan as well as Tehran's regional posturings in the face of other regional crises are all clear indications of the country's observance and attention to international laws.

The Iranian president has also emphasized: On the whole, we can say the Islamic Republic of Iran has constantly favored good-neighborly ties and peaceful coexistence of different countries, and shown its good faith in this matter.

Iran: Khamene'i's First Friday Prayer Sermon

LD0902175996 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Provincial Network in Persian 0815 GMT 9 Feb 96

[Friday prayers first sermon by Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, leader of the Islamic Revolution, in Tehran — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the Name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted] Today we all need to be as courageous as Imam 'Ali. The Iranian nation needs the courage. Anyone who is an official of this government, his need for courage is greater. Anyone who has access to a portion of the Muslims' national wealth, his need for courage is greater. The greater the people's trust is in some one, the greater is his need for courage. Individual members of the nation also need this courage. The entire nation of Iran needs this courage.

Today the world infidels, our enemies, are the most intelligent [zirak] people in the world. They can twist the most important political and publicity issues round their finger. They are the same people who are running world politics. They are managing the world's nations. They change world governments. They occupy various regions of the world. They create wars and terminate some other wars. They uproot one regime to replace it with another. These wicked, evil, cunning, and first-class deceitful statesmen of the world have united against the Islamic Republic. Their policy vis-a-vis the Islamic republic is to humiliate the republic and the Iranian nation. Their policy is to question our principles through deceit and to prove that we have chosen the wrong path.

Their policy is to tell us that you are making a mistake by not observing the accepted international norms, and that you are making a mistake by not surrendering to the United States and world arrogance's international policies. You are making a mistake over the issue of Palestine; you are making a mistake over the issue

Bosnia; you are making a mistake over the issue of Muslims, and so on.

This is today's policy. Not just today's policy, but it has been their policy from the beginning of the revolution to disparage [takhta'a] the Iranian nation and Iranian officials. They want to disparage more strongly those who are confronting them more seriously. They ridicule whatever hurts them more. They want to ridicule our approach towards women; to ridicule the universities, the performing of prayers, communal [jama'at] prayers, the non-consumption of alcoholic drinks, and to ridicule the devotion to Almighty God. Ridicule, ridicule. My dear ones, sometimes very great men will lose their temper if they become the subject of ridicule, humiliation, and insult. They become frustrated, wretched, and fed up. Then they are forced to do as the Romans do; saying they have no other choice. Then the superpowers will have a hearty laugh on the sly because they have gotten what they wanted and have removed an obstacle.

They ridicule revolutionary movements in the world to such an extent that these movements take back openly and clearly all their revolutionary ideas, aspirations and slogans. Or they disparage the movements or ridicule them. [passage omitted]

It is here that Shia, the followers of Imam 'Ali, and above all Muslims who believe in following the path of Imam 'Ali should learn a lesson from the bravery of Imam 'Ali. [passage omitted]

You have a priceless jewel in your hands. You have carried out a great task. You have discovered an endless war in your country. You have acquired Islam, reached independence and freedom, and have been able to free yourself from the yoke of superpowers. One day this country, this university, this Tehran, this security post, the armed forces, the government offices, the intelligence services — all and all were the U.S. properties. Today if the nation sees anyone even in the most remote areas of the country who favors America, they will despise them. [crowd chants approval]

One day there was no nation in this country. There were no elections, no Majles, no voting. Everything was superficial, unreal, and artificial. There was nothing in this country. The Pahlavi rule was really a strange period for the nation. [passage omitted] Everything in this country was superficial. The universities were superficial, the intellectual community was superficial, as well as the press and the government.

The only movement that was real was the popular movement of religion. They were viewed with hatred and spite. There were also a slight and very small

patriotic movement here and there. The past regime created this atmosphere in the nation.

You have come and laid the basic foundation for everything. Today science is developing in this country; industry, universities, personalities of individuals and ideologies are all developing in this country. Freedom is developing in its true meaning and education is developing. The nation is gradually moving toward achieving its position in the world. Yesterday the Iranian nation was not considered as a nation to be worthy of attention. Those who came here received hardship allowances [haq-e tavahosh]. Today you are a nation with an important opinion to express. If you are opposed to an international issue then this issue cannot be solved. If the Iranian nation is serious in opposing any issue in the world, that issue will not be solved. This nation, this great country, this government have such a position in the world thanks be to God. Everything is developing and bearing fruit. The appearance [jelvah] of the Iranian nation is gradually eye-catching. These are your achievements.

Let the enemy insult us and say whatever it wants to say. [passage omitted]

Iran: Khamene'i Gives Second Sermon at Friday Prayers

*LD0902163896 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Provincial Network in Persian
0815 GMT 9 Feb 96*

[Second Friday prayers sermon delivered in Tehran by Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the Name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. [passage omitted]

These days we are marking the [17th] anniversary of the Islamic revolution and we are also preparing for the forthcoming Majles elections. I should, therefore, raise the important issue of the elections as well as the rallies planned for 22d Bahman [corresponding to 11 February, Revolution Day]. The revolution anniversary rallies demonstrate the people's presence in the urban areas and on the city streets. There is also another rally planned to mark Jerusalem Day [16 February]. We must say something about each issue.

I wish to begin by saying that the great Islamic revolution of Iran was truly an exceptional revolution. We have read or heard about other revolutions in history. We have also observed some uprisings in our own era. I wish you, our dear people, would read more books and publications about such instances in history. What I am going to mention briefly, you can read about

in detail in various books. Nothing can replace a good book.

Truly our revolution was different from other revolutions. Its origin and the people's motive were different from such occasions in history as the [Russian] October Revolution, which led to 70-80 years of communism. That revolution and that popular uprising had different slogans. You can compare its achievements with our revolution. See how many tragedies it created, whereas here things were different — as different as the earth is from the sky. I am only comparing popular revolutions. That was a popular revolution too. The Great French Revolution before that was the same. I am not saying anything about those cases in history when a revolution was achieved by a military coup d'etat.

Our revolution was really amazing in view of its greatness, safety, purity, lack of deviation, an absence of tragedies — seen in other popular uprisings — and its lasting features and achievements.

In my previous post [as president] I visited a country which I do not wish to name here. It is a big country with a large population. They also staged a revolution. The day I visited that country, 19 years had passed from their revolution. When our motorcade was driving from the airport toward the residence they chose for us, that country's president was sitting beside me. We were talking about various issues. I saw they had blocked some streets. There were also workers busy digging in some places. I asked: It seems you are busy implementing some projects in the city? He answered: Oh yes, we have not had time to resurface the city streets which were destroyed by the revolution. This was their capital city and they started resurfacing its streets only after 19 years. See how efficient a revolution can be!

Revolutionary governments of the past used to spend all their resources to keep themselves in power. They never had any proper elections. They could not begin development projects or construct new buildings. Even the most advanced revolutionary states used to declare five-year plans, without being able to implement them. Those several-year plans were only real on paper, they were hardly ever implemented. Most of the revolutionary governments failed for the same reason, for shortcomings, for incapability, and other promises they never realized. [passage omitted].

Our revolution was indeed unique, both in terms of its slogans and its objectives, and the method by which it attained power after destroying the enemy and the corrupt Pahlavi regime. [passage omitted]

If the revolution achieved two momentous tasks, one of them is the formation of the Islamic system. This was

indeed a great achievement, especially since it happened in this region and in this part of the world. It was also great because there was no precedent for it since the early days of Islam.

The second achievement is as great as the first one. Some may even say that this was indeed more important than the first achievement. In any case, these two achievements enjoy at least an equal degree of importance. The second achievement of our revolution is that it revived the Islamic identity all over the world. That is to say, Muslim nations, communities, and individuals across the world gained a sense of integrity and power because of this revolution. They no longer see themselves as a collection of condemned communities. Some of them have begun to have a presence on the political scene and have gained control of their state, while others are about to achieve this.

In a country like Algeria, this sense of Islamic identity reached a stage where the Islamic groups there were able to win the elections. This development was so dangerous for the arrogance [the United States and the West] that they had to stage a military coup, imprison the Muslims, and suppress the people. Of course, they will not be able to extinguish the flame. But they think they can now rest for a while.

In a country like Turkey, this Islamic identity gained such a dimension that a party with an Islamic title and known by people as an Islamic group won more votes than all other parties. Of course, the arrogance, the enemies, the United States and its allies also intervened in Turkey in a bid to prevent that party from forming a government. They also took action there, even though the nature of this action was different to what they did in Algeria.

In Afghanistan, the same kind of presence of Islam was so strong that the Soviet army was forced to leave — that is to say, a huge army of several million men and the biggest army in the world in terms of its size and its equipment. Of course, later on our Afghan brothers were not sufficiently grateful for this divine blessing. I want our Afghan brothers to listen to this very carefully. [passage omitted]

So far, the Afghan brothers have been ungrateful for this blessing. They have been fighting and killing each other. They have done to their towns and cities what the Russians, the Soviets, and the communists never did. They must change their ways and return to the right path. Nevertheless, the victory of Islam in Iran made it possible for them to defeat the Soviet Union.

Today, in many other countries of the world too, Islamic groups and associations are present. They are strong and

they envision a certain future for themselves. There is the possibility that some of these may form governments — if they are permitted, that is. Moreover, they are a threat to the enemies of Islam, and they consider the United States and the other enemies of Islam as their own enemy. This is all due to the blessings brought about by the revival of the Islamic identity; a sense which was created by our revolution. [congregation chants: God is greater]

This, more than any thing else, brings about the wrath of the global arrogance. Of course, when the Americans, their allies, or the Zionist networks of the world press and news agencies want to say or write things against Iran, they tend to level certain accusations against us. They say: You violate human rights and disregard the rights of women. They say: You want to manufacture nuclear weapons, and so on and so forth. However, these are all superficial excuses. The real essence of the issue is something else.

The essence of the issue is what I just said. They say: Why have you caused the revival of Islamic identity all over the world, so that all Muslims wake up from their slumbers and undergo a transformation and leave behind the state of being a servile and obedient lamb about to be slaughtered? This is the cause of their anger, as they themselves admit. What I said was not just an analysis. It was based on facts, and we have been informed that this is the cause of their anger.

We have also been informed that it is a fact that the Islamic revolution created a momentous transformation in the character and spirit of Muslims all over the world. And we know that they are very angry about this.

What is the arrogance going to do in the face of this phenomenon [the Islamic revival]? Please pay attention. What is arrogance going to do? It only has two ways. If it can go down any of the two paths, it will save itself from this threat of Islamic revival which, in any case, has already taken place. A revolution has taken place, a strong government under the leadership of a great leader, the late Imam [Khomeyni], made its mark on the world, it is over. If they could have stopped it, that would have been the cure for them [the arrogance]. But they could not and this event took place. Now that this event has taken place, now that it is too late, what are they to do? They have two ways, if they can go down one of these paths, if they achieve one of their aims, the danger for arrogance will be eliminated; and if not, the danger remains.

What are the two paths that arrogance can take? One of them is to destroy the Islamic Republic, this strong fortress. If they could do this, then this would be an experience for the Muslims of the world. They would

say: What is the use? We have struggled, we have given many dead, we have created so many problems for ourselves and at the end, what did we achieve? We survived for 5, 10, or 15 years and, just as Iran, just as they destroyed the Islamic Republic and ended it, so we shall be destroyed. This would be a lesson for the Muslims. The threat to the enemy would be eliminated, this is what they believe. Of course, we can take issue with this. Even if this impossible task was achieved, even if this dream, the destruction, God forbid, of the Islamic Republic, took place one day, arrogance's problems would not be solved. This is one of their ways.

Therefore, they are trying to weaken and destroy this system through an economic blockade, through war, through threats. And so far, they have made a number of decisions to undertake certain dangerous tasks but they realized they could not. In any case, they are stuck. What are they to do with the Islamic Republic?

The second way, which they think is easier than the first way but would have the same effect, would be to do something so that the Islamic Republic remained but in a way that it compromised with arrogance, with its enemy of yesterday. The Islamic Republic would stop its slogans of opposition. This is their second way. If this were to take place, then again the danger facing arrogance would be eliminated. Why? Because the compromise of the Islamic Republic with arrogance would damage the moral of Muslims throughout the world, now that their spirits are high. They would say: What is the use? The people work hard and struggle but the leaders, just as in the Islamic Republic of Iran, compromised. Again, the threat to arrogance would be lifted.

Everything that the United States, Zionism, the United States' mercenaries, its lackeys, its propaganda apparatus, its military, and security apparatuses and others are doing today is on one of these two paths. They are trying to either destroy the Islamic Republic or to put pressure on us so that the officials of the Islamic Republic will go to them and say: Look, we want to make up and be friends.

Well, they have their wishes, especially now that their leaders are young and as the saying goes, let the young have their dreams. Let them dream on, let them wish for the destruction of the Islamic Republic or let the dream of forcing the Islamic Republic to go to the United States and apologize, saying: Well, we are sorry, we have said bad things about you for a few years, we have shouted: Death to America. Please forgive us. They have their wishes.

However, will this empty dream become a reality or not? This is the important point. Let me say this: O people of Iran; O those who in the present era undertook and created the greatest epic of contemporary history, know this: These American dreams will not become reality under one set of circumstances only; under other circumstances the dream can become a reality. Under which circumstances would it be impossible for the American dream to become reality? Under the circumstances when the masses of the people, all levels of society, remain on the political scene, recognize that the revolution is theirs, recognize that the officials come from the people themselves, remain sensitive to the issues of the nation and the revolution — just as they have been for the past 17 years. If the people continue to remain on the scene, if they continue to recognize that the revolution is theirs — which it is — if they continue to recognize that officials belong to the people — which they do — if they continue to care about the revolution and not turn to apathy; if they continue to feel that the country and revolution belongs to them; if these continue — which, thank God, has been the case up until today — not only the United States, even if there were 10 superpowers in the world, they could not lay a finger on the revolution! [congregation chants in support: "God is Great!"]

And the enemy has not been able to do a damn thing so far for this very same reason. The people were present during the war, the people were present during the elections, the people were present during demonstrations, the people were present during referendums. Whenever the government, the system, or the officials had a problem, when they referred to the people, the problem was solved. When the officials asked for financial help, the people created a mountain of money; when they asked for money for the war effort, the women took their earrings off and gave them away; when they asked for blood during the war, all sorts of people rolled their sleeves up, saying: Take my blood. They asked for young people [to fight in the war], the young left their studies, school, work, farms, parents, their everything and went to the front, and the parents gave up their children without blinking an eye.

Don't think the United States is weak materially, no sir! It is very strong materially, it has everything. However, what it has has no effect on what this revolution has. Those material things threaten regimes that have come to power through a coup d'etat; those things threaten those regimes that have no contact with their people. The Islamic system has something that bombs, foreign invasions, and the like will not affect. In fact, they will make it stronger. And that thing is the people, the people. The Islamic system has the people. As

long as the people are with the Islamic system, as long as the people continue to open their windows to find out what is going on if there is a commotion outside and offer their help if needed, as long as young people care about the issues of the revolution, as long as politics is a part of the people's lives, as long as the university remains politicized, the bazaar remains politicized, the community of clergy remains politicized, as long as everyone and everyone intervenes in the political process, gives their views, as long as we have this, the United States nor anyone else — nuclear weapons, money, facilities, technology, the dollar etc — can do nothing. This is the first eventuality. As long as this is the case, the enemy can do nothing.

If, however, this was not the case, if the Islamic system loses the people, if the people become apathetic, if they become cold toward the revolution, if their faith weakens, if the people start thinking of their personal lives and thinking: We have served the revolution for many years, it is enough, let us get one with our lives; if the trader thinks of his trade, if the shopkeeper thinks of his shop, if the farmer thinks of his farm, if the student thinks of his studies, if the seminary student thinks of his religious studies, etc; if people start valuing their own lives more than the country and the revolution then, of course, we shall be open to attack. We have not come down from the skies. We are not in ourselves superior to other peoples in history or to our forefathers. The superiority of our people came about because they followed the path of God, because of their faith, because of their presence on the scene [of the revolution], because of their work for the sake of God. [passage omitted]

Take care, take care, O dear people. Be careful and do not lose God's path. Our country's pride has been that it has managed in a short period to create legislative bodies. It organized the Islamic Consultative Majles. This body has served four terms with pride and strength. It passed laws and carried out its duties. And now we have the election for the fifth term of the Majles and the people must take part, it is their duty, a religious duty.

The Presidency, the Cabinet, the Guardian Council, the Assembly of Experts, all the organs that are responsible for the revolution have carried out their duties, the country was never left in a state of lawlessness. The country was never without a president or a Majles, the country did not waste time hanging around. Only in one case, the enemy had been looking forward to the day when the great imam of the people passed away, thinking everything would come to a halt. And even then, thanks to the people, the officials, those responsible, the enemies' wish did not come true, the

people carried out their duties to the best of their abilities. This is a source of pride for us.

The elections are ahead of us, my dear ones. Let me tell you, take part in the elections — all of you. Choose your election candidates for the Majles and write their name on your ballot papers and drop them in the ballot boxes when the time comes. Do that, all of you. Search and find competent people. The Islamic Consultative Majles is important. The Islamic Consultative Majles is the most sensitive and effective legislative organ of this country, so to speak. If there are deputies there who do not care for the revolution, do not care for the country, do not care for the constitution, do not accept the constitution, do not take the country's interests as important, do not understand the animosities of the world arrogance, seek to flatter the world arrogance, seek to have their names written large in the Zionist affiliated press and have them say that they opposed the Islamic Republic of Iran's system, if they seek all of that they would destroy the Majles, they would destroy the people, and destroy the country. They are good for nothing. If a deputy should get the job who before getting into the Majles obligated himself to others and is forced to pay his dues when he is inside the Majles, such a deputy is good for nothing. [passage omitted]

If a deputy should get into the Majles who does not have the required understanding of the country's issues, the required intelligence, the required knowledge, education, understanding, such a deputy is good for nothing.

Being a deputy is significant. I beg those brothers and sisters who notice — between themselves and God — that this task is beyond them, not to step forward. Now, do not let this statement make some become diffident and step aside out of caution. No! Those who feel that they can, it is their religious duty to step forward. Every thing in this divine system must be resolved through closeness to God and the intention to become closer to God. When you vote, when you choose, it is for God. When you are chosen, when you become a candidate, again it is a matter of duty to God. And even when I speak here, I must speak out of duty to God. And those who introduce candidates to the people, they must do it for God as well. [passage omitted]

Last year, at the New Year [corresponding to 21 March 1995], as well as this year, I called on all the people to be socially and economically disciplined. Now is the time for that to be observed. Let all observe that discipline; let all be meticulous in what they do. Let them not embark on any illegal act, on any wrongful act, any immoral act, unethical act, misappropriation of public purse. Let them not abuse each other, insult each other. This nation is an enlightened one, a religious

nation, one which believes in the aspirations of the revolution, one which loves the revolution. Know that it is the revolution which can save this country. If revolutionary values are forgotten no power can reform this country, reconstruct it, save it, resolve its problems. [passage omitted]

This country needs revolutionary slogans for a long time to come in order to be reconstructed, for its bones to become strong, for it to become invulnerable, for the enemies to stop their greed. [passage omitted]

Therefore, the elections are important. That is one thing. All must take part. Second, it is something that can take place without any difficulty — just as, thank God, happened in earlier rounds. [passage omitted]

As for the 22d Bahman [11 February, anniversary of the Islamic revolution] rallies, take care, my dear ones. Your presence in the streets, all of you, men and women, will be the actual and palpable manifestation of the presence and support of the nation for the aspirations of the revolution. The thing which no comment can negate or deny is your presence in the streets, which has been repeated every year and every year has been like an arrow in the eyes of the ill-wishers. [passage omitted]

Iran: Commentary on U.S. Policy in Afghanistan

NC1202090896 *Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian*
0445 GMT 12 Feb 96

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] Battles between the government and opposition forces around Kabul, which intensified following a brief interval, are continuing. The shelling of the city and air raids have killed or wounded more civilians.

The current situation, which should have been halted in the auspicious month of Ramadan and following the government's call for a cease-fire, has become more critical because of the opponents' suspicions about the government's objectives. While the government's opponents in southern and western Kabul have been halted by forces faithful to Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani, reports speak of a buildup of forces of the conflicting sides for a determining attack.

In parallel with the military-political developments in the Afghan crisis, the leaders of the Coordination Council are meeting in Islamabad, Pakistan. Despite their coming together in this council as the other opponents of the government, these leaders have failed to achieve a specific result in their search for someone

from among themselves to take up the reins of power in Kabul.

The current impasse in the Afghan crisis, especially in the military and political areas, has made the long-suffering Afghan people, fed up with the four-year war among the rival groups in their country, feel the need for peace and tranquility more than ever. Despite describing the Afghan situation as tragic and continuously sending its envoy to the region, the United Nations has failed to answer the Afghan people's peace demands.

Political observers refer to America's overt and covert intervention in this field and believe that as long as America does not achieve its specific objectives in the region, the passive stance by international organizations on the Afghan problem will continue. Although Washington expresses concern about the worsening situation in Afghanistan, it fans the flames of tension in the war-stricken country by helping to protract the neither-war-nor-peace situation.

American diplomacy in southern Asia, especially after the Cold War and the disintegration of the former Soviet Union, has been aimed at altering the national-Islamic identity of the Afghan nation and, ultimately, of the Central Asian nations. Within this context, promoting ethnic feelings instead of religious accord is among the sinister objectives of this hegemonistic power. Meanwhile, some Afghan groups' monopolistic attitude to power—conforming with Washington's objectives in the region—has created a favorable atmosphere for America.

The participation of all the jihadi groups in political talks with the government to break the impasse in the Afghan crisis is an inevitable necessity. These talks can—in line with the wants of the Muslim Afghan nation—determine the country's political future.

Iran: Kuwaiti Statement Blames Iran for Unrest

NC1202075896 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian
Kordestan in Persian 1500 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Reports indicate that Bahrain has been the scene of violent unrest during the past few days. Clashes, largely in the Bahraini capital of Manama, resulted in arson in several parts of the city. Many people have been arrested in relation with this.

The Kuwaiti Government has issued a statement accusing the clerical regime's embassy in Kuwait of having a hand in and fomenting the unrest in Bahrain. Other Kuwaiti officials, in one way or another, have blamed and condemned Iran for the unrest.

Iran: Initial Scrutiny of Majles Candidates Completed

LD1202122296 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic
of Iran First Program Network in Persian
1030 GMT 12 Feb 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The initial examination of the suitability of applicants wishing to stand as candidates in the elections for the fifth term of the Majles has been completed. Our correspondent reports:

[Correspondent] The task of carrying out the initial examination of the suitability of applicants wishing to stand as candidates in the elections for the fifth term of the Majles has been completed by the executive teams in the constituencies and the applicants have been informed of their suitability or unsuitability by the governors or district heads of the relevant constituencies.

Mr. Tabesh, head of the country's election headquarters, announced this information today and added: All the applicants for candidacy in the Majles elections now know whether they have been deemed to be suitable or not and the people who object to having been rejected may lodge their complaint with the supervisory delegation in the relevant province within four days, by the end of office hours on 26 Bâhman [15 February].

He added: At the present time, in accordance with the election law, only the applicants themselves have been informed about whether they have been approved or rejected. Mr. Tabesh said: The next stages in the approval or rejection of the applicants for candidacy in the Majles elections are the responsibility of the provincial supervisory delegations and the central supervisory delegation and the Guardian Council.

The head of the country's election headquarters stressed: The approval of the applicants by the executive teams, which has been conveyed to them at this stage, does not mean that these people can engage in publicity [campaigning] and no one is allowed to begin campaigning yet.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Iran's Borujerdi Urges Taleban To Join Afghan Talks

LD0902203796 Tehran IRIB Television Third
Program Network in English 1915 GMT 9 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Iran's deputy foreign minister, Mr. [Ala'eddin] Borujerdi, in an interview at the end of his negotiations in Pakistan with Islamabad authorities including the prime minister, Mrs. Benazir Bhutto, and also two Afghan factional leaders, once again called

on all Afghan groups to avoid further bloodshed by resolving their problems at the negotiation table.

Announcing that Iran is determined to continue its relentless endeavor to restore peace in the neighboring country of Afghanistan, the Iranian diplomat also called on the Taliban to join the negotiations in order to help establish tranquillity in their country.

Pakistan: Foreign Minister Satisfied With U.S. Talks

BK1102144796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 11 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The foreign minister, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, has expressed satisfaction over his talks with senior American officials, describing their attitude as positive and satisfactory. Talking to APP before leaving Washington for Houston, he rejected allegations of transfer of nuclear technology to Pakistan by China. Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said the vicious nature of media campaign and talks about sanctions can only be counter-productive. He made it clear that any sanctions on Pakistan or China on the basis of unfounded allegations would be against American national interests also. He said nobody has raised the question of sanctions and he found that the American officials too were worried over the level of campaign that has been carried out in the U.S. media.

The foreign minister said Pakistan-American exchange of views covered a broad agenda of bilateral relations, regional security, and developments in Afghanistan. The test firing and deployment of Prithvi missile by India also figured during his talks with the acting secretary of state, Mr. Strobe Talbott. Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali added that in this context they also discussed the question of nonproliferation in South Asia.

The foreign minister is scheduled to meet some investors in Houston before leaving for New York tomorrow for talks with the UN secretary general.

Pakistan: Navy Claims U.S.-Supplied Military Equipment 'Useless'

BK1102111696 Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 8 Feb 96 pp 1,8

[Report by Hamidullah Abid]

[FBIS Translated Text] Islamabad — The Pakistan Navy has declared the P3C Orion aircraft, which it is likely to receive as a result of the passage of the Brown Amendment, to be ineffective and useless. The Navy says that none of the equipment that it is being supplied is useful. Over the past six years India has acquired 13 aircraft, all of which are far better than the Orions. Even

when Pakistan does acquire the Orion aircraft, India's naval strike capability will be double that of Pakistan.

According to sources, Orion fighter airplanes are capable of striking long-range targets, but three airplanes is not sufficient for the requirements of Pakistan's Navy. In 1989 these airplanes were useful, but with the six-year lapse these airplanes now hardly bring the ratio between India and Pakistan to one:two. The three airplanes cannot be used simultaneously. Only two planes can be used for attack, the third must be grounded as a reserve. Though two planes can disrupt Indian naval installations, total destruction is not possible.

According to defense experts Orions are extremely slow in speed, so despite their striking capability they will be seen on Indian radars before reaching their target. It is not true that India has no aircraft to combat the Orions. India already possesses a squadron of five 38-II (Russian-made Orions) and a squadron of eight TU 142 Bear-F aircraft. Though India does not have the Harpoon missiles, systems that identify and torpedo submarines, it does have the missile "Sea Eagles," which is equal in power to the Harpoon. Defense experts say that "Sea Eagles" cannot be launched from a sea patrol airplane, but India can launch these from Sea Warrior fighter planes or Sea King helicopters. This capability is more swift than the P3C Orions from the United States.

The MK-46 torpedoes are also something of which the Pakistan Navy cannot be proud. According to the experts, Pakistan will only receive enough parts to make one MK-46, and this rocket has been rendered obsolete after the six-year lapse; India has acquired a much higher capability.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: Minister Discusses Bombing Investigation

BK1202044396 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 12 Feb 96

[Received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Minister of Irrigation, Power and Energy and Deputy Minister of Defence General Anuruddha Ratwatte moved proclamation made by President under Section 2 of the Public Security Ordinance (Chapter 40) bringing into operation the provisions of Part II of the aforesaid Ordinance within the Municipal limits of Colombo, the Municipal limits of Dehiwala-Mount Lavinia, the Divisional Secretaries' divisions of Nugegoda and Kolonnawa of the Colombo district, all the Divisional Secretaries' divisions of the Gampaha district, the Northern province,

the Eastern province, the Divisional Secretaries' divisions of Bibile, Madulla, Medagama, Moneragala, Kataragama and Gram Seva divisions of Mahakulugolla, Ethimale and Kotiyagala of the Siyambalanaduwa Divisional Secretary's division of the Moneragala district, the Divisional Secretaries' divisions of Kalpitiya, Wanathawilluwa and Karuwalagaswewa of the Puttalam district, the Divisional Secretaries' divisions of Nochchiyagama, Nuwaragampalatha (Central), Medawachchiya, Kebithigollawa, Padaviya and Horowpathana of the Anuradhapura district and the Divisional Secretaries' divisions of Dimbulagala and Lankapura of the Polonnaruwa district with effect from 4th February, 1996 be approved when the emergency debate was taken up in Parliament on Friday.

General Ratwatte also said: The motion relating to the state of emergency which was in force from January 4, 1996 within the above areas was approved by this House on January 11, 1996.

Dastardly acts

The LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] at a time when it has suffered major military setbacks at the hands of the security forces and when the government is working with a firm determination to restore peace in the country by providing a lasting solution to the ethnic problem have resorted to dastardly acts of terror in and around the city of Colombo which has led to mass destruction of life and property. These dastardly actions are clearly intended to provoke the other communities to harass the innocent Tamil citizens and cause damage to the country's economy, he said.

Loaded with rice

The Deputy Minister went on to give details of the devastating incident at the Central Bank, according to information available. He said a lorry with a load of country rice had left Vavuniya town (South of the Thandikulam checkpoint) and reached Colombo on January 30, 1996. Thereafter it has been seen in a parking place (private) at Wolfandhal Road near the government flats close to the police guard room.

The two suspects now under arrest who arrived in Colombo in early January, were staying, one at Elibank Road and the other at a lodging place at Pettah. They had been shown the lorry meant for this operation at this parking place on January 30, 1996. The two suspects and the driver of the lorry had spent the night (January 30) in the lorry parked at this parking place. On the following morning, that is, January 31, 1996 the lorry had been taken to a warehouse close-by (in the Colombo 12 area) and the major portion of the load of rice was unloaded by the two

suspects and the driver. The lorry had thereafter been moved to the Price Park. The two suspects along with the driver had thereafter driven the lorry along the Main Street and had proceeded up to the Presidential Secretariat roundabout passing the Khan Clock Tower, Sir Baron Jayathilaka Mawatha, York Street, Upper Chatham Street, Janadhipathi Mawatha and the Central Bank. The lorry had thereafter been turned round at the Presidential Secretariat roundabout and proceeded back again through the Janadhipathi Mawatha towards the Central Bank. Close to the Central Bank the two suspects had got down from the lorry which was driven at a slow speed and had started firing at the security personnel including the police at the Bank.

Explosive device

One of the suspects had then strapped an explosive device on the Bank barricade and the lorry had attempted to ram against the bank front rails. The lorry had then entered the front verandah of the Central Bank and had exploded causing much damage to life and property.

General Ratwatte said the security situation in the city of Colombo and its suburbs is constantly reviewed by a Co-ordinating Committee set up for the purpose. The city of Colombo has been sectorised and the three services along with the police provide stringent security to the sectors entrusted to each service. Additionally the police with the assistance of the three armed services conduct cordon and search operations within the city of Colombo and also check persons and vehicles to detect any terrorist suspects.

Constant vigilance

With this planned and concerted action by the Ministry of Defence through its Co-ordinating Committee for Colombo security and with the efforts of the three services and the police major terrorist attacks in Colombo had been averted for some time.

Members of the House will no doubt agree that despite all these stringent security measures incidents of this nature do occur from time to time. Further investigations are being conducted to ascertain at which point the explosives had been introduced into this lorry.

"It would also be seen from the statement I am tabling in Parliament today that the incidence of violence committed by the LTTE terrorists during the month of January continues."

It is therefore considered necessary that the existing state of Emergency in the above mentioned areas should continue for a further period to enable the law enforcement authorities to maintain law and order in

those areas since the provisions of the normal law in force are inadequate.

I therefore sincerely hope that all the Honourable Members of this House would extend their unstinted support to the government in its efforts to solve this ethnic problem and also to extend the present state of emergency in the above mentioned areas for a further period, he said.

Sri Lanka: Minister Assures Parliament of Commitment To Fight LTTE

BK1202042796 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English
12 Feb 96

[Report by Rodney Martinez — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Power and Energy Minister and Deputy Minister of Defence General Anuruddha Ratwatte Friday reaffirmed the government's commitment to continue the war against the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] and pave the way for lasting peace in the country with the proposed political settlement.

"We will not stop the war whatever the setbacks we will go ahead with our military strategy to end terrorism and bring all communities together under one banner", General Ratwatte said.

Condolences

Making a special statement in parliament yesterday at the commencement of the emergency debate Minister Ratwatte expressed his deep condolences to the families of the victims in the Central Bank bomb attack and also the businesses that suffered damage. He promised them all assistance to return to normal activity.

Eighty three people were killed and a large number was wounded in the bomb attack. Two suspects are already in custody, the minister said.

Canards and rumours

The Minister came down hard on mischief makers who spread canards and false rumours to destabilise public life, in the aftermath of the bomb attack vowing to deal with them severely. He was referring to the water poisoning episode. "We have already arrested some people who spread this rumour. We have no mercy on such elements", he said. "They will be sent on a six-month battle stint to Palaly". If necessary we will bring in laws to give effect to this the minister said.

He said that he had received information that the rumour was spread by means of telephones in the city. Gangs on motorcycles too were active in spreading these rumours.

Public spiritedness

Speaking of the Central Bank bombing General Ratwatte paid the highest tribute to the public spirit displayed by all citizens including the police, armed forces and the hospital staff, at a time of emergency.

He reserved special praise for those civilians who helped capture the two of the bombers while they were fleeing from the scene in Fort.

Minister Ratwatte said that the bombing as they have witnessed was nothing new. There had been numerous bombings in the city for the last 13 years costing 2453 civilian lives.

Coward

"Even the best security in the world cannot anticipate the moves of a band of deranged terrorists who had taken a heavy beating and are on the run. These are the cowards who cannot face a battle". Even places like London was not spared from the bombs of the IRA.

Situation in the East

Minister Ratwatte also said amid all difficulties, they were able to restore normalcy in about 90 per cent of the East. Before long complete normalcy will be restored in the East.

The UNP [United National Party] boasted about retaining control of the East. But only 45 per cent of the East was under government control. There was no development carried out in the area.

On the other hand this government has drawn up a plan to develop the East.

The last government concentrated only on the East while giving away the entire North to the LTTE.

Sri Lanka: Police Arrest LTTE Suspect for Bomb Plot

BK1002112396 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English
1045 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] An LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] suspect named Newton has been taken into custody while waiting at a bus halt in Avissawella. Following information received from the suspect, police at Puwakpitiya in Avissawella were able to take into custody three more persons and a lorry suspected to be on a bombing mission to Colombo. Police said that the lorry and the suspects have been detained after investigations revealed a secret compartment which could be used to store explosives. The CID [Criminal

Investigation Department] is conducting further investigations.

Sri Lanka: Army To Assume Responsibility for Colombo Security

BK1202024596 Colombo SUNDAY OBSERVER in English 11 Feb 96

[Report by S. Selvakumar and Ramani Kangara Arachchi — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The security of Colombo is to be taken over by the Army shortly following a decision by the defence authorities last week, the 'Sunday Observer' learns. Army Major General Jaliya Nammuni has been asked to take charge of security in Colombo once the Army's take-over becomes effective, reliable military sources disclosed.

The move follows a revamping of security measures islandwide after the Fort bombing which is considered the most devastating urban guerilla strike by the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam].

The Army was given the task of maintaining security in Colombo several years ago but the military were later withdrawn and the Police resumed control. The police are at present responsible for security in the city and suburbs.

IGP [Inspector General of Police] W. Rajaguru told last Thursday's weekly Cabinet news briefing that the police security blanket over the city had been intensified last year and had not been relaxed.

The new security measures being implemented following the Fort bomb attack also include new restrictions on travellers' movement through the Thandikulam checkpoint in Vavuniya and heightened surveillance of the eastern flank in the Uva region.

Contingency plans are also being drawn up to deal with large scale emergencies in urban areas. Officials also said that tough action would be taken against scare mongers in the city.

Sri Lanka: LTTE Spokesman—Group Responsible for Bombing

BK1002114096 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 10 Feb 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Wasantaraja, the media spy who has surfaced as a spokesman for the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam], has openly admitted that the LTTE is responsible for the bomb blast at the Sri Lanka Central Bank building. He has done so although the political headquarters of the terrorist organization in

a statement has tried to disclaim the responsibility. A news dispatch from London received by LANKAPU-VATH quotes that Wasantaraja, who served as Tiger [word indistinct] in Colombo for a short while, has stated in a recent BBC interview that the target of the LTTE was to show their ability to attack economic aim in Colombo itself. He has said that this is the LTTE way of putting pressure on the business community and through them on the government.

Sri Lanka: LTTE Seeks Funds Via Internet From Canada, Europe

BK1002100496 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 10 Feb 96

[Report by Rodney Martinez — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar told parliament yesterday that the government had reason to believe that the LTTE's [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] capacity to engage in terrorist activities was mainly due to the continued flow of funds to the LTTE chest through which the procurement and smuggling of illicit arms have been sustained.

The minister who was speaking during the emergency debate said the LTTE had been active in several western countries for many years with their own offices or front organisations operating publicly.

Funds collected by the LTTE overseas continued to have a destabilising effect on Sri Lanka. This, the Minister said, was manifest both in terms of supporting terrorist activities in Sri Lanka and precipitating the displacement of people internally and externally.

Mr. Kadirgamar also said: "Continued fund-raising abroad through which terrorist activities in Sri Lanka are being sustained by the LTTE, has become a major factor militating against the government's search for a political solution on the basis of devolution of power. The activities of the LTTE abroad had also received considerable publicity in Sri Lanka. There is, therefore, a growing public opinion against the seeming impunity with which the LTTE conducts fund-raising activities and their propaganda directed at sustaining terrorism in Sri Lanka".

The LTTE and its front organisations now openly campaign for funds abroad. Quite apart from the well organised "collectors" being sent to extort money from the asylum seekers in Western countries, the Internet information network is also being used effectively and openly for this purpose. An internet bulletin of December 18, 1995 designed to appeal to the humanitarian sentiments of the donor communities (that is, to adopt

a child) was clearly aimed at raising funds for LTTE activities.

What is new and significant in this is the fact that the fund raisers now openly list LTTE as one of the organizations through which funds can be channelled for "humanitarian purposes". Seven addresses of Tamil organizations are given in seven countries (Canada, Switzerland, Denmark, United Kingdom, Norway, Australia and Germany). It is significant that none of these fund raisers ask the donors to channel their contributions to any of the recognised international humanitarian organizations such as the ICRC and other respected NGOs [Nongovernmental Organizations] based in Sri Lanka. They always request donations to LTTE-related expatriate organisations based in foreign countries.

Since the fund raisers now list the organisations mentioned together with the LTTE, which is also a recipient of these donations, it would be necessary for the governments of the countries concerned to check as to what purposes the contributions received by these organisations are being used. This is essential to ensure that such funds are not channelled towards the purchase of illicit arms or used for any other activities directed against another country.

Some of the Internet providers, for example Freenet Carleton of Canada, have circulated a much more direct and serious message under the subject "Urgent Appeal for Money for Missiles - Contribute generously to LTTE". This openly acknowledges that this particular fund raising is for the purchase of missiles for the LTTE. Although the Internet is a "free information forum" not subject to any governmental control, the LTTE has openly abused the Carleton University Internet facility for illegal fund raising and for death threats.

Several journalists have highlighted the comprehensive campaign being waged by the LTTE and their front organisations to seek funds abroad for arms and other activities in Sri Lanka. These are referred to in, for instance Sonntag Zeitung a leading paper in Switzerland, Bunder Zeitung (Switzerland), CBS Radio Interview published in the Sri Lanka Express of 15th December, 1995, which highlights the fact that the Tamil Eelam Society of Canada claims to be collecting funds from the asylum seekers in that country to the extent of 4 million dollars a month to be remitted to the LTTE.

Mr. Kadirgamar also said that terrorism at the national level was inextricably interlinked to terrorism at the international level. "the problem of terrorism is global, any

measures to effectively counter the problem required inter-state bilateral co-operation to discharge an obligation really imposed on States under international law, to eliminate all activities within a territory of one state, which are of a terrorist character and which are directed towards the carrying out of terrorist activities in other states. This obligation would also cover these acts which may seemingly be legitimate but are really directed towards sustaining terrorist activities in other states, such as fund raising activities, which funds are ultimately channelled for the purpose of purchase of sophisticated arms, etc."

Sri Lanka: LTTE Cadres Confront Troops, Police in Batticaloa

*BK1102125296 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English
1045 GMT 11 Feb 96*

[FBIS Transcribed Text] At least five terrorists were killed in a confrontation with troops at Vandaramkoolai in the Batticaloa District last morning. One soldier also died while three others were injured. The skirmish began when the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] ambushed a security forces clearing party in the Vandaramkoolai detachment. Troops retaliated effectively and recovered weapons, ammunition and a communication equipment during a subsequent search operation. The Operational Headquarters of the Defense Ministry reports that they also recovered the bodies of five terrorists.

Meanwhile, at least two terrorists were killed at Chettiyapallian in a similar confrontation in Batticaloa District on Friday [9 February] evening. STF [Special Task Force] troops who ambushed a group of LTTE cadres moving toward the Batticaloa lagoon suffered no casualties.

A police patrol confronted a group of terrorists at Nawaladi, about 3 km from Valachchenai in Batticaloa District, on Friday around 1600. Terrorists retaliated [as heard] and fled the area. During a subsequent search, police recovered a body of a terrorist. The police suffered no casualties. The Operational Headquarters of the Ministry of Defense told SLBC that at another incident yesterday at Kalkudah, about 4 km northwest of Valachchenai, troops in ambush confronted a group of terrorists killing two of them. Troops recovered a hand grenade and a cyanide capsule.



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